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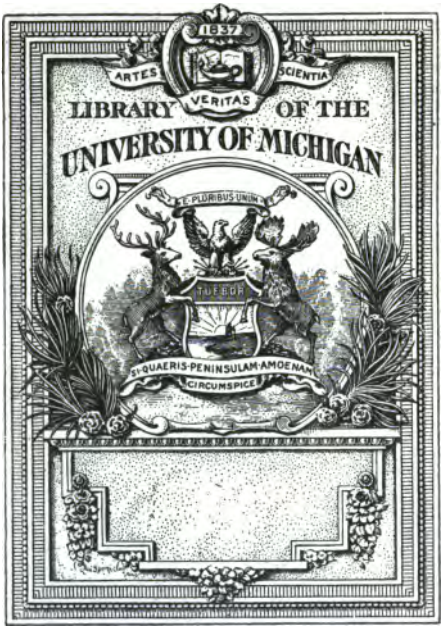
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THE TOILERS OF THE SEA.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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"The wreck was held fast as in a vice."

Toilers of the Sea, II. Frontispiece.

THE

TOILERS OF THE SEA.

By VICTOR HUGO.

Vol. II.

BOSTON:
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TOILERS OF THE SEA.

PART II.

GILLIATT.

BOOK I.

GILLIATT THE EVIL ONE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE THAT IS HARD TO REACH AND DIFFICULT TO LEAVE AGAIN.

THE boat which had been observed at so many points on the coast of Guernsey on the previous evening was, as the reader has guessed, the old Dutch barge or sloop. Gilliatt had chosen the channel along the coast among the rocks. It was the most dangerous way, but it was the most direct. To take the shortest route was his only thought. Shipwrecks will not wait; the sea is a pressing creditor; an hour's delay may be irreparable. His anxiety was to go quickly to the rescue of the machinery in danger.

One of his objects in leaving Guernsey was to avoid arousing attention. He set out like one escaping from justice, and seemed anxious to hide from human eyes. He shunned the eastern coast, as if he

did not care to pass in sight of St. Sampson and St. Peter's Port, and glided silently along the opposite coast, which is comparatively uninhabited. Among the breakers it was necessary to ply the oars; but Gilliatt managed them on scientific principles; taking the water quietly, and dropping it slowly, he was able to move in the darkness with as little noise and as rapidly as possible. One watching him would have believed that he was bent upon some evil errand.

In truth, though embarking desperately in an enterprise which might well be called impossible, and risking his life with nearly every chance against him, he feared nothing but the possibility of some rival in the work which he had set before him.

As the day began to break, those unknown eyes which look down upon the world from boundless space might have beheld, at one of the most dangerous and solitary spots at sea, two objects, the distance between which was gradually decreasing, as the one was approaching the other. One, which was almost imperceptible in the wide movement of the waters, was a sailing-boat. In this was a man. It was the sloop. The other, black, motionless, colossal, rose above the waves, a singular form. Two tall pillars issuing from the sea bore aloft a sort of cross-beam, which was like a bridge between their tops. This bridge, so singular in shape that it was impossible to imagine what it was from a distance, touched each of the two jambs. It resembled a gateway. Of what use could such an erection be in that open plain, the sea, which stretched around it far and wide? One might have fancied that it was some Titanic cromlech, planted there in mid-ocean by an imperious

whim, and built up by hands accustomed to proportion their labors to the great deep. Its wild outline stood well-defined against the clear sky.

The morning light was growing stronger in the east; the brightness in the horizon deepened the shadow on the sea. In the opposite sky the moon was sinking.

These two pillars were the Douvres. The huge mass held fast between them, like an architrave between two pillars, was the wreck of the Durande.

The rock, thus holding fast and exhibiting its prey, was terrible to behold. Inanimate things look sometimes as if endowed with a dark and hostile spirit towards man. There was a menace in the attitude of the rocks. They seemed to be biding their time.

Nothing could be more suggestive of haughtiness and arrogance than their whole appearance, — the conquered vessel, the triumphant abyss. The two rocks, still streaming with the tempest of the day before, were like two wrestlers sweating from a recent struggle. The wind had sunk; the sea rippled gently; here and there the presence of breakers might be detected in the graceful streaks of foam upon the surface of the waters. A sound came from the sea like the murmuring of bees. All around was level except the Douvres, rising straight, like two black columns. Up to a certain height they were completely bearded with seaweed; above this their steep haunches glittered at points like polished armor. They seemed ready to commence the strife again. The beholder felt that they were rooted deep in mountains whose summits were beneath the sea. Their aspect was full of a sort of tragic power.

Ordinarily the sea conceals her deeds; she desires that they should remain in obscurity. Her unfathomable deeps keep silence. She wraps herself in a mystery which rarely consents to give up its secrets. We know her savage nature, but who can tell the extent of her dark deeds? She is at once open and secret; she hides away carefully, and cares not to divulge her actions; wrecks a vessel, and, covering it with the waves, ingulfs her work deep as if in shame. Among her crimes is hypocrisy. She slays and steals, conceals her booty, ignores and smiles. She roars and is gentle by turns.

Here, however, was nothing of the kind. The Douvres, lifting above the level of the waters the shattered hull of the Durande, had an air of triumph. The imagination might have pictured them as two monstrous arms reaching upwards from the gulf, and exhibiting to the tempest the lifeless body of the ship. Their aspect was like that of an assassin boasting of his evil deeds.

The solemnity of the hour contributed something to the impressiveness of the scene. There is a mysterious grandeur in the dawn, as of the border-land between the region of consciousness and the world of our dreams. There is something spectral in that confused transition time. The immense form of the two Douvres, like a capital letter H, the Durande forming its cross-stroke, appeared against the horizon in all their twilight majesty.

Gilliatt was attired in his seaman's clothing, — a Guernsey shirt, woollen stockings, thick shoes, a homespun jacket, trousers of thick stuff, with pock-

ets, and a cap upon his head of red worsted, of a kind then much in use among sailors, and known in the last century as a *galérienne.*

He recognized the rocks, and steered towards them.

The situation of the Durande was exactly contrary to that of a vessel gone to the bottom, — it was a vessel suspended in the air.

No problem more strange was ever presented to a salvor.

It was broad daylight when Gilliatt arrived in the waters about the rock.

As we have said, there was but little sea. The slight agitation of the water was due almost entirely to its confinement among the rocks. Every passage, small or large, is subject to this chopping movement. The inside of a channel is always more or less white with foam. Gilliatt did not approach the Douvres without caution.

He cast the sounding-lead several times.

He had a cargo to disembark.

Accustomed to long absences, he had at home a number of necessaries always ready. He had brought a sack of biscuit, another of rye-meal, a basket of salt-fish and smoked beef, a large can of fresh water, a Norwegian chest painted with flowers, containing several coarse woollen shirts, his tarpaulin, and his waterproof overalls, and a sheepskin which he was accustomed to throw at night over his clothes. On leaving Le Bû de la Rue he had put all these things hastily into the boat, with the addition of a large loaf. In his hurry he had brought no other

tools but his huge forge-hammer, his chopper and hatchet, and a knotted rope. Furnished with a grappling-iron and with a ladder of that sort, the steepest rocks become accessible, and a good sailor will find it possible to scale the rudest escarpment. In the island of Sark the visitor may see what the fishermen of the Havre Gosselin can accomplish with a knotted cord.

His nets and lines and all his fishing-apparatus were in the boat. He had placed them there mechanically, and by habit; for he intended, if his enterprise continued, to sojourn for some time in an archipelago of rocks and breakers, where fishing nets and tackle are of little use.

At the moment when Gilliatt was skirting the great rock, the sea was retiring, — a circumstance favorable to his purpose. The departing tide laid bare at the foot of the smaller Douvre one or two table-rocks, horizontal or only slightly inclined, and bearing a fanciful resemblance to boards supported by brackets. These table-rocks, sometimes narrow, sometimes broad, standing at unequal distances along the side of the great perpendicular column, were continued, in the form of a thin cornice, up to a spot just beneath the Durande, the hull of which stood swelling out between the two rocks. The wreck was held fast there as in a vise.

This series of platforms was convenient for approaching and surveying the position. It was convenient also for disembarking the contents of the boat provisionally; but it was necessary to hasten, for they were above water for a few hours only.

With the rising tide, the table-rocks would be again beneath the foam.

It was before these table-rocks, some level, some slanting, that Gilliatt pushed in and brought the boat to a stand. A thick mass of wet and slippery sea-wrack covered them, rendered more slippery here and there by their inclined surfaces.

Gilliatt pulled off his shoes and sprang naked-footed on to the slimy weeds, and made fast the boat to a point of rock.

Then he advanced as far as he could along the granite cornice, reached the rock immediately beneath the wreck, looked up, and examined it.

The Durande had been caught, suspended, and, as it were, fitted in between the two rocks, at about twenty feet above the water. It must have been a heavy sea which had cast her there.

Such effects from furious seas have nothing surprising for those who are familiar with the ocean. To cite one example only: On the 25th of January, 1840, in the Gulf of Stora, a tempest struck with its expiring force a brig, and casting it almost intact completely over the broken wreck of the corvette "La Marne," fixed it immovable, bowsprit first, in a gap between the cliffs.

The Douvres, however, held only a part of the Durande.

The vessel, snatched from the waves, had been, as it were, uprooted from the waters by the hurricane. A whirlwind had wrenched it against the counteracting force of the rolling waves; and the vessel, thus caught in contrary directions by the two claws

of the tempest, had snapped like a lath. The after-part, with the engine and the paddles, lifted out of the foam and driven by all the fury of the cyclone into the defile of the Douvres, had plunged in up to her midship beam and remained there. The blow had been well directed. To drive it in this fashion between the two rocks, the storm had struck it as with an enormous hammer. The forecastle, carried away and rolled down by the sea, had gone to fragments among the breakers.

The hold, broken in, had scattered out the bodies of the drowned cattle upon the sea.

A large portion of the forward side and bulwarks still hung to the riders by the larboard paddle-box, and by some shattered braces easy to strike off with the blow of a hatchet.

Here and there, among beams, planks, and rags of canvas, pieces of chains and other remains of wreck were seen lying about among the rugged fragments of shattered rock.

Gilliatt surveyed the Durande attentively. The keel formed a roofing over his head.

A serene sky stretched far and wide over the waters, scarcely wrinkled with a passing breath. The sun rose gloriously in the midst of the vast azure circle.

From time to time a drop of water was detached from the wreck and fell into the sea.

CHAPTER II.

A CATALOGUE OF DISASTERS.

THE Douvres differed in shape as well as in height.

Upon the Little Douvre, which was curved and pointed, long veins of reddish-colored rock, of a comparatively soft kind, could be seen branching out and dividing the interior of the granite. At the edges of these red dykes were fractures favorable to climbing. One of these fractures, situated a little above the wreck, had been so laboriously worn and scooped out by the splashing of the waves that it had become a sort of niche, in which it would have been quite possible to place a statue. The granite of the Little Douvre was rounded at the surface, and, to the feel at least, soft like touchstone; but its softness detracted nothing from its durability. The Little Douvre terminated in a point like a horn. The Great Douvre, polished, smooth, glossy, perpendicular, and looking as if cut out by the builder's square, was in one piece, and seemed made of black ivory. Not a hole, not a break, in its smooth surface. The escarpment looked inhospitable. A convict could not have used it for escape, nor a bird for a place for its nest. On its summit there was a horizontal surface, as upon The

Man rock; but the summit of the Great Douvre was inaccessible.

It was possible to scale the Little Douvre, but not to remain on the summit; it would have been possible to rest on the summit of the Great Douvre, but impossible to scale it.

Gilliatt, having rapidly surveyed the situation of affairs, returned to the boat, landed its contents upon the largest of the horizontal cornice rocks, made of the whole compact mass a sort of bale, which he rolled up in tarpaulin, fitted a sling rope to it with a hoisting-block, pushed the package into a corner of the rocks where the waves could not reach it, and then clutching the Little Douvre with his hands, and holding on with his naked feet, he clambered from projection to projection, and from niche to niche, until he found himself level with the wrecked vessel high up in the air.

Having reached the height of the paddles, he sprang upon the poop.

The interior of the wreck presented a mournful aspect.

Traces of a great struggle were everywhere visible. There were plainly to be seen the frightful ravages of the sea and wind. The action of the tempest resembles the violence of a band of pirates. Nothing is more like the victim of a criminal outrage than a wrecked ship violated and stripped. The storm-cloud, the thunder, the rain, the squall, the waves, and the breakers, — these are terrible accomplices.

Standing upon the dismantled deck, it was natural to dream of the presence of something like a furious

stamping of the spirits of the storm. Everywhere around were the marks of their rage. The strange contortions of certain portions of the iron-work bore testimony to the terrific shocks dealt by the winds. The between-decks were like the cell of a lunatic in which everything has been broken.

No wild beast can compare with the sea for mangling its prey. The waves are full of talons. The north wind bites; the billows devour; the waves are like hungry jaws. The ocean strikes like a lion with its heavy paw, seizing and dismembering at the same moment.

The ruin conspicuous in the Durande presented the peculiarity of being detailed and minute. It was a sort of horrible stripping and plucking. Much of it seemed done with design. The beholder was tempted to exclaim, "What wanton mischief!" The ripping of the planking was edged here and there artistically. This peculiarity is common with the ravages of the cyclone. To chip and tear away is the caprice of the great devastator; its ways are like those of the professional torturer. The disasters which it causes wear a look of ingenious punishments. One might fancy it actuated by the worst passions of man. It refines in cruelty like a savage; while it is exterminating it dissects bone by bone; it torments its victim, avenges itself, and takes delight in its work; it even appears to descend to petty acts of malice.

Cyclones are rare in our latitudes, and are for that reason the more dangerous, being generally unexpected. A rock in the path of a heavy wind may become the pivot of a storm. It is probable that the

squall had thus rotated upon the point of the Douvres, and had turned suddenly into a waterspout on meeting the shock of the rocks, — a fact which explained the casting of the vessel so high among them. When the cyclone blows, a vessel is of no more weight in the wind than a stone in a sling.

The damage received by the Durande was like the wound of a man cut in twain. It was a divided trunk from which issued a mass of débris like the entrails of a body. Various kinds of cordage hung floating and trembling; chains swung chattering; the fibres and nerves of the vessel were there naked and exposed. What was not smashed was disjointed.

Fragments of the sheeting resembled curry-combs bristling with nails; everything bore the appearance of ruin; a handspike had become nothing but a piece of iron, a sounding-lead nothing but a lump of metal; a dead-eye had become a mere piece of wood, a halliard an end of rope, a strand of cord a tangled skein, a bolt-rope a thread in the hem of a sail. All around was the lamentable work of demolition. Nothing remained that was not unhooked, unnailed, cracked, wasted, warped, pierced with holes, destroyed; nothing hung together in the dreadful mass, but all was torn, dislocated, broken. There was that air of drift which characterizes the scene of all struggles, — from the mêlées of men, which are called battles, to the mêlées of the elements, to which we give the name of chaos. Everything was sinking and dropping away,—a rolling mass of planks, panelling, iron-work, cables, and beams had been arrested just at the great fracture of the hull, whence the least

additional shock must have precipitated them into the sea. What remained of her powerful frame, once so triumphant, was cracked here and there, showing through large apertures the dismal gloom within.

The foam from below spat its flakes contemptuously upon this broken and forlorn outcast of the sea.

CHAPTER III.

SOUND, BUT NOT SAFE.

GILLIATT did not expect to find only a portion of the ship existing. Nothing in the description, in other respects so precise, of the captain of the "Shealtiel" had led him to anticipate this division of the vessel in the centre. It was probable that the "diabolical crash" heard by the captain of the "Shealtiel" marked the moment when this destruction had taken place under the blows of a tremendous sea. The captain had doubtless worn ship just before this last heavy squall; and what he had taken for a great sea was probably a waterspout. Later, when he drew nearer to observe the wreck, he had only been able to see the stern of the vessel, the remainder — that is to say, the large opening where the fore-part had given way — having been concealed from him among the masses of rock.

With that exception, the information given by the captain of the "Shealtiel" was strictly correct. The hull was useless, but the engine remained intact.

Such chances are common in the history of shipwreck. The logic of disaster at sea is beyond the grasp of human science.

The masts, having snapped short, had fallen over the side; the chimney was not even bent. The

great iron plating which supported the machinery had kept it together, and in one piece. The wooden casings of the paddle-boxes were disjointed, like the leaves of wooden sun-blinds; but through their apertures the paddles themselves could be seen in good condition. A few only of their floats were missing.

Besides the machinery, the great stern capstan had resisted the destruction. Its chain was there, and, thanks to its firm fixture in a frame of joists, might still be of service, unless the strain of the voyal should break away the planking. The flooring of the deck bent at almost every point, and was tottering throughout.

On the other hand, the trunk of the hull, fixed between the Douvres, held together, as we have already said, and it appeared strong.

There was something like derision in this preservation of the machinery, — something which added to the irony of the misfortune. The sombre malice of the unseen powers displays itself sometimes in such bitter mockeries. The machinery was saved, but its preservation did not make it any the less lost. The ocean seemed to have kept it only to demolish it at leisure. It was like the playing of the cat with her prey.

Its fate was to stay there, and to be dismembered day by day. It was going to serve as a plaything for the savage sea. It was slowly to dwindle, and, as it were, to melt away. For what could be done? That this vast block of mechanism and gear, at once massive and delicate, condemned to

fixity by its weight, delivered up in that solitude to the destructive elements, exposed in the gripe of the rock to the action of the wind and wave, could, under the frown of that implacable spot, escape from slow destruction, seemed a madness even to imagine.

The Durande was the captive of the Douvres.

How could she be extricated from that position?

How could she be delivered from her bondage?

The escape of a man is difficult; but what a problem was this, — the escape of a vast and cumbrous machine!

CHAPTER IV.

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY.

GILLIATT was pressed on all sides by demands upon his labors. The most urgent, however, was to find a safe mooring for the boat; then, a shelter for himself.

The Durande having settled down more on the port than on the starboard side, the right paddle-box was higher than the left.

Gilliatt ascended the paddle-box on the right. From that position, although the gut of rocks stretching in abrupt angles behind the Douvres had several elbows, he was able to study the ground-plan of the group.

This survey was the preliminary step of his operations.

The Douvres, as we have already described them, were like two high gable-ends, forming the narrow entrance to a straggling alley of small cliffs with perpendicular faces. It is not rare to find in primitive submarine formations these singular kinds of passages, which seem cut out with a hatchet.

This defile was extremely tortuous, and was never without water, even in the low tides. A current, much agitated, traversed it at all times from end to

end. The sharpness of its turnings was favorable or unfavorable, according to the nature of the prevailing wind; sometimes it broke the swell and caused it to fall, sometimes it exasperated it. This latter effect was the more frequent. An obstacle arouses the anger of the sea, and pushes it to excesses. The foam is the exaggeration of the waves.

The stormy winds in these narrow and tortuous passages between the rocks are subjected to a similar compression, and acquire the same malignant character. The tempest frets in its sudden imprisonment. Its bulk is still immense, but sharpened and contracted; and it strikes with the massiveness of a huge club and the keenness of an arrow. It pierces even while it strikes down. It is a hurricane contracted, like the draught through the crevice of a door.

The two chains of rocks, leaving between them this kind of street in the sea, formed stages at a lower level than the Douvres, gradually decreasing, until they sank together at a certain distance beneath the waves.

There was another such gullet, of less height than the gullet of the Douvres, but narrower still, forming the eastern entrance of the defile. It was evident that the double prolongation of the ridge of rocks continued the kind of street under the water as far as The Man rock, which stood like a square citadel at the extremity of the group.

At low water, indeed, which was the time at which Gilliatt was observing them, the two rows of sunken rock showed their tips, some high and dry,

and all visible, and preserving their parallel without interruption.

The Man formed the boundary, and buttressed on the eastern side the entire mass of the group, which was protected on the opposite side by the two Douvres.

The whole, from a bird's-eye view, appeared like a winding chaplet of rocks, having the Douvres at one extremity and The Man at the other.

The Douvres, taken together, were merely two gigantic shafts of granite, protruding vertically and almost touching each other, and forming the crest of one of the mountainous ranges lying beneath the ocean. Those immense ridges had risen out of the unfathomable deep. The surf and the squall had broken them up and divided them like the teeth of a saw. Only the tip of the ridge was visible; this was the group of rocks. The remainder, which the waves concealed, must have been enormous. The passage in which the storm had planted the Durande was the way between these two colossal shafts.

This passage, zigzag in form as the forked lightning, was of about the same width in all parts. The ocean had so fashioned it. Its eternal commotion produces sometimes those singular regularities. There is a sort of geometry in the action of the sea.

From one extremity to the other of the defile, the two parallel granite walls confronted each other at a distance which the midship frame of the Durande measured exactly. Between the two Douvres, the widening of the Little Douvre, curved and turned

back as it was, had formed a space for the paddles. In any other part, they must have been shattered to fragments.

The high double façade of rock within the passage was hideous to the sight. When, in the exploration of the desert of water which we call the ocean, we come upon the unknown world of the sea, all is uncouth and shapeless. So much as Gilliatt could see of the defile from the height of the wreck was appalling. In the rocky gorges of the ocean we may often trace a strange permanent impersonation of shipwreck. The defile of the Douvres was one of these gorges, and its effect was horrible. The oxides of the rock showed on the escarpment here and there in red places, like marks of clotted blood; it resembled the splashes on the walls of an abattoir. Associations of the charnel-house haunted the place. The rough marine stones, diversely tinted, — here by the decomposition of metallic amalgams mingling with the rock, there by the mould of dampness, manifested in places by purple scales, hideous green blotches, and ruddy splashes, — awakened ideas of murder and extermination. It was like the unwashed walls of a chamber which had been the scene of an assassination; or it might have been imagined that men had been crushed to death there, leaving traces of their fate. The peaked rocks produced an indescribable impression of accumulated agonies. Certain spots appeared to be still dripping with the carnage; here the wall was wet, and it looked impossible to touch it without leaving the fingers bloody. The blight of massacre seemed every-

where. At the base of the double parallel escarpment, scattered along the water's edge, or just below the waves, or in the worn hollows of the rocks, were monstrous rounded masses of shingle, some scarlet, others black or purple, which bore a strange resemblance to internal organs of the body; they might have been taken for human lungs, or heart, or liver, scattered and putrefying in that dismal place. Giants might have been disembowelled there. From top to bottom of the granite ran long red lines, which might have been compared to oozings from a funeral bier.

Such aspects are frequent in sea-caverns.

CHAPTER V.

A WORD UPON THE SECRET CO-OPERATIONS OF THE ELEMENTS.

THOSE who, by the disastrous chances of sea-voyages, happen to be condemned to a temporary habitation upon a rock in mid-ocean, find that the form of their inhospitable refuge is by no means a matter of indifference. There is the pyramidal-shaped rock, a single peak rising from the water; there is the circle-rock, somewhat resembling a round of great stones; and there is the corridor-rock. The latter is the most alarming of all, — not only because of the ceaseless agony of the waves between its walls, or the tumult of the imprisoned sea, but also because there are certain obscure meteorological characteristics which appear to appertain to this parallelism of two marine rocks. The two straight sides seem a veritable electric battery.

The disposition of these corridor-rocks is an important fact; the first result of their position is an action upon the air and the water. The corridor-rock acts upon the waves and the wind mechanically by its form, galvanically by the different magnetic action rendered possible by its vertical height, its masses in juxtaposition and contrary to each other.

This form of rock attracts to itself all the forces scattered in the winds, and exercises over the tempest a singular power of concentration.

Hence there is in the neighborhood of these breakers a certain accentuation of storms.

It must be borne in mind that the wind is composite. The wind is believed to be simple, but it is by no means simple. Its power is not merely dynamic, it is chemical also; but this is not all, — it is magnetic. Its effects are often inexplicable. The wind is as much electrical as aerial. Certain winds coincide with the aurora borealis. The wind blowing from the bank of the Aiguilles rolls the waves one hundred feet high, — a fact observed with astonishment by Dumont-d'Urville. "The corvette," he says, "knew not what to obey."

In the south seas the waters will sometimes become inflated like an outbreak of immense tumors; and at such times the ocean becomes so terrible that the savages fly to escape the sight of it. The blasts in the north seas are different; they are mingled with sharp points of ice, and their gusts, unfit to breathe, will blow the sledges of the Esquimaux backwards on the snow. Other winds burn. The simoon of Africa is the typhoon of China, and the samiel of India. Simoon, Typhoon, and Samiel are believed to be the names of demons. They descend from the heights of the mountains. A storm vitrified the volcano of Tolucca. This hot wind — a whirlwind of inky color, rushing upon red clouds — is alluded to in the Vedas: "Behold the black god, who comes to steal the red cows."

In all these facts we trace the presence of the electric mystery.

The wind indeed is full of it; so are the waves. The sea, too, is composite in its nature. Under its waves of water which we see, it has its waves of force which are invisible. Its constituents are innumerable. Of all the elements the ocean is the most indivisible and the most profound.

Endeavor to conceive this chaos so enormous that it dwarfs all other things to one level. It is the universal recipient, reservoir of germs of life, and mould of transformations. It amasses and then disperses; it accumulates and then sows; it devours and then creates. It receives all the waste and refuse waters of the earth, and converts them into treasure. It is solid in the iceberg, liquid in the wave, fluid in the estuary. Regarded as matter, it is a mass; regarded as a force, it is an abstraction. It equalizes and unites all phenomena. It may be called the infinite in combination. By force and disturbance it arrives at transparency. It dissolves all differences, and absorbs them into its own unity. Its elements are so numerous that it becomes identity. One of its drops is complete, and represents the whole. From the abundance of its tempests it attains equilibrium. Plato beheld the mazy dances of the spheres. Strange fact, though not the less real, the ocean, in the vast terrestrial journey round the sun, becomes, with its flux and reflux, the balance of the globe.

In a phenomenon of the sea all other phenomena are manifest. The sea is blown out of a waterspout as from a syphon; the storm observes the principle

of the pump; the lightning issues from the sea as from the air. Aboard ships dull shocks are sometimes felt, and an odor of sulphur issues from the receptacles of chain cables; the ocean boils. "The Devil has put the sea in his caldron," said De Ruyter. In certain tempests, which characterize the equinoxes and the return to equilibrium of the prolific power of Nature, vessels breasting the foam seem to give out a kind of fire, phosphoric lights chase each other along the rigging, so close sometimes to the sailors at their work that the latter stretch forth their hands and try to catch as they fly these birds of flame. After the great earthquake of Lisbon, a blast of hot air, as from a furnace, drove before it towards the city a wave sixty feet high. The oscillation of the ocean is closely related to the convulsions of the earth.

These immeasurable forces produce sometimes extraordinary inundations. At the end of the year 1864, one of the Maldive Islands, at a hundred leagues from the Malabar coast, actually foundered in the sea. It sunk to the bottom like a shipwrecked vessel. The fishermen who sailed from it in the morning found nothing when they returned at night; scarcely could they distinguish their villages under the sea. On this occasion boats were the spectators of the wrecks of houses.

In Europe, where Nature seems restrained by the presence of civilization, such events are rare and are thought impossible. Nevertheless, Jersey and Guernsey originally formed part of Gaul, and at the moment while we are writing these lines an equinoctial gale

has demolished a great portion of the cliff of the Firth of Forth in Scotland.

Nowhere do these terrific forces appear more formidably conjoined than in the surprising strait known as the Lyse-Fiord. The Lyse-Fiord is the most terrible of all the gut rocks of the ocean. Their terrors are there complete. It is in the northern sea, near the inhospitable Gulf of Stavanger, and in the 59th degree of latitude. The water is black and heavy, and subject to a fever of intermittent storms. In this sea, and in the midst of this solitude, rises a great sombre street, — a street for no human footsteps. None ever pass through there; no ship ever ventures in. It is a corridor ten leagues in length, between two rocky walls of three thousand feet in height. Such is the passage which presents an entrance to the sea. The defile has its elbows and angles like all these streets of the sea, — never straight, having been formed by the irregular action of the water. In the Lyse-Fiord the sea is almost always tranquil; the sky above is serene; the place terrible. Where is the wind? Not on high. Where is the thunder? Not in the heavens. The wind is under the sea; the lightnings within the rock. Now and then there is a convulsion of the water. At certain moments, when there is perhaps not a cloud in the sky, nearly half-way up the perpendicular rock, at a thousand or fifteen hundred feet above the water, and rather on the southern than on the northern side, the rock suddenly thunders, lightnings dart forth and then retire like those toys which lengthen out and spring back again in the

hands of children. They contract and enlarge; they dart from cliff to cliff; re-enter the rock, issue forth again, recommence their play, multiply their heads and tips of flame, grow bristling with points, strike wherever they can, recommence again, and then are extinguished with a sinister abruptness. Flocks of birds fly wide in terror. Nothing is more mysterious than that artillery issuing out of the invisible. One cliff attacks the other, raining lightning blows from side to side. Their war concerns not man. It signals the ancient enmity of two rocks in the impassable gulf.

In the Lyse-Fiord the wind whirls like the water in an estuary; the rock performs the function of the clouds, and the thunder breaks forth like volcanic fire. This strange defile is a voltaic pile, the plates of which are the double line of cliffs.

CHAPTER VI.

A STABLE FOR THE HORSE.

GILLIATT was sufficiently familiar with marine rocks to grapple in earnest with the Douvres. Before all, as we have just said, it was necessary to find a safe shelter for the boat.

The double row of reefs, which stretched like a sinuous trench behind the Douvres, connected itself here and there with other rocks, and suggested the existence of blind passages and hollows opening out into the straggling way, and joining again to the principal defile like branches to a trunk.

The lower part of these rocks was covered with kelp, the upper part with lichens. The uniform level of the seaweed marked the line of the water at the height of the tide, and the limit of the sea in calm weather. The points which the water had not touched presented those silver and golden hues communicated to marine granite by the white and yellow lichen.

A crust of conoidal shells covered the rock at certain points, — the dry-rot of the granite.

At other points in the retreating angles, where fine sand had accumulated, ribbed on its surface rather by the wind than by the waves, appeared tufts of blue thistles.

In the indentations, sheltered from the winds, could be traced the little perforations made by the sea-urchin. This shelly mass of prickles, which moves about, a living ball, by rolling on its spines, its armor composed of ten thousand pieces artistically adjusted and welded together, the sea-urchin, which is popularly called, for some unknown reason, "Aristotle's lantern," wears away the granite with its five teeth, and lodges itself in the hole. It is in such holes that the samphire-gatherers find it. They cut it in halves and eat it raw, like an oyster. Some steep their bread in the soft flesh. Hence its other name, — "sea-egg."

The tips of the further reefs, left out of the water by the receding tide, extended close under the escarpment of The Man to a sort of creek enclosed nearly on all sides by rocky walls. Here was evidently a possible harborage. It had the form of a horseshoe, and opened only on one side to the east wind, which is the least violent of all winds in that sea-labyrinth. The water was shut in there, and almost motionless. The shelter seemed comparatively safe. Gilliatt, moreover, had not much choice.

If he wished to take advantage of the low water, it was important to make haste.

The weather continued to be fine and calm. The insolent sea was for a while in a gentle mood.

Gilliatt descended, put on his shoes again, unmoored the cable, re-embarked, and pushed out into the water. He used the oars, coasting the side of the rock.

Having reached The Man rock, he examined the entrance to the little creek.

A fixed, wavy line in the motionless sea, a sort of wrinkle, imperceptible to any eye but that of a sailor, marked the channel.

Gilliatt studied for a moment its boundaries, almost indistinct under the water; then he held off a little in order to veer at ease and steer well into channel, and suddenly with a stroke of the oars he entered the little bay.

He sounded.

The anchorage appeared to be excellent.

The sloop would be protected there against almost any of the contingencies of the season.

The most formidable reefs have quiet nooks of this sort. The ports which are thus found among the breakers are like the hospitality of the fierce Bedouin, — friendly and sure.

Gilliatt placed the sloop as near as he could to The Man, but still far enough to escape grazing the rock, and he cast his two anchors.

That done, he crossed his arms, and reflected on his position.

The sloop was sheltered. Here was one problem solved; but another remained: where could he now shelter himself?

He had the choice of two places,—the sloop itself, with its corner of cabin, which was scarcely habitable, and the summit of The Man rock, which was not difficult to scale.

From either of these refuges it was possible at low water, by jumping from rock to rock, to gain

the passage between the Douvres where the Durande was fixed, almost without wetting the feet.

But low water lasts but a short while, and all the rest of the time he would be cut off either from his shelter or from the wreck by more than twelve hundred feet. Swimming among breakers is difficult at all times; if there is the least commotion in the sea, it is impossible.

He was driven to give up the idea of shelter in the sloop or on The Man.

No resting-place was possible among the neighboring rocks.

The summits of the lower ones disappeared twice a day beneath the rising tide.

The summits of the higher ones were constantly swept by the flakes of foam, and promised nothing but an inhospitable drenching.

No choice remained but the wreck itself.

Was it possible to seek refuge there?

Gilliatt hoped it might be.

CHAPTER VII.

A CHAMBER FOR THE VOYAGER.

HALF an hour afterwards, Gilliatt, having returned to the wreck, climbed to the deck, went below, and descended into the hold, completing the summary survey of his first visit.

By the help of the capstan he had raised to the deck of the Durande the package which he had made of the lading of the sloop. The capstan had worked well. Bars for turning it were not wanting; Gilliatt had only to take his choice among the mass of wreck.

He found among the fragments a chisel,—dropped, no doubt, from the carpenter's box,—and he added it to his little stock of tools.

Besides this,—for in a poverty of appliances so complete everything counts for a little,—he had his jack-knife in his pocket.

Gilliatt worked the whole day long on the wreck, clearing away, propping, arranging.

At nightfall he observed the following facts:—

The entire wreck shook in the wind. The carcass trembled at every step he took. There was nothing stable or strong except the portion of the hull jammed between the rocks, which contained the engine. There the beams were powerfully supported by the granite walls.

Fixing his home in the Durande would be imprudent. It would increase the weight; but far from adding to her burden, it was important to lighten it. To burden the wreck in any way was indeed the very contrary of what he wanted.

The mass of ruin required, in fact, the most careful management. It was like a sick man at the approach of dissolution. The wind would do sufficient to help it to its end.

It was, moreover, unfortunate enough to be compelled to work there. The amount of disturbance which the wreck would have to withstand would necessarily distress it, — perhaps beyond its strength.

Besides, if any accident should happen in the night, while Gilliatt was sleeping, he must necessarily perish with the vessel. No assistance was possible; all would be over. In order to help the shattered vessel, it was absolutely necessary to remain outside it.

How to be outside, and yet near it, — this was the problem.

The difficulty became more complicated as he considered it.

Where could he find a shelter under such conditions?

Gilliatt reflected.

There remained nothing but the two Douvres. They seemed hopeless enough.

From below it was possible to distinguish upon the upper plateau of the Great Douvre a sort of protuberance.

High rocks with flattened summits, like the Great Douvre and The Man, are a sort of decapitated peaks. They abound among the mountains and in the ocean. Certain rocks, particularly those which are met with in the open sea, bear marks like half-felled trees. They have the appearance of having received blows from a hatchet. They have been subjected, in fact, to the blows of the gale, that indefatigable pioneer of the sea.

There are other still more profound causes of marine convulsions. Hence the innumerable bruises upon these primeval masses of granite. Some of these sea-giants have their heads struck off.

Sometimes these heads, from some inexplicable cause, do not fall, but remain shattered on the summit of the mutilated trunk. This singularity is by no means rare. The Devil's Rock, at Guernsey, and the Table, in the Valley of Anweiler, illustrate some of the most surprising features of this strange geological enigma.

Some such phenomena had probably fashioned the summit of the Great Douvre.

If the protuberance which could be observed on the plateau were not a natural irregularity in the stone, it must necessarily be some remaining fragment of the shattered summit.

Perhaps the fragment might contain some excavation, — some hole into which a man could creep for cover. Gilliatt asked for no more.

But how could he reach the plateau? How could he scale that perpendicular wall, hard and polished as a pebble, half covered with the growth of glu-

tinous confervæ, and having the slippery look of a soapy surface?

The ridge of the plateau was at least thirty feet above the deck of the Durande.

Gilliatt took out of his box of tools the knotted cord, hooked it to his belt by the grapnel, and set to work to scale the Little Douvre. The ascent became more difficult as he climbed. He had forgotten to take off his shoes, — a fact which increased the difficulty. With great labor and straining, however, he reached the point. Safely arrived there, he raised himself and stood erect. There was scarcely room for his two feet. To make it his lodging would be difficult. A Stylite might have contented himself there; Gilliatt, more exacting in his requirements, wanted something more commodious.

The Little Douvre, leaning towards the great one, looked from a distance as if it was saluting it; and the space between the Douvres, which was some score of feet below, was only eight or ten feet at the highest points.

From the spot to which he had climbed, Gilliatt saw more distinctly the rocky excrescence which partly covered the plateau of the Great Douvre.

This plateau rose eighteen feet, at least, above his head.

A precipice separated him from it. The curved escarpment of the Little Douvre sloped away out of sight beneath him.

He detached the knotted rope from his belt, took a rapid glance at the dimensions of the rock, and slung the grapnel up to the plateau.

The grapnel scratched the rock, and slipped. The knotted rope with the hooks at its end fell down beneath his feet, swinging against the side of the Little Douvre.

He renewed the attempt; slung the rope farther, aiming at the granite protuberance, in which he could perceive crevices and scratches.

The cast was this time so neat and skilful that the hooks caught.

He pulled from below. A portion of the rock broke away, and the knotted rope with its heavy iron came down once more, striking the escarpment beneath his feet.

He slung the grapnel a third time.

It did not fall.

He put a strain upon the rope; it resisted. The grapnel was firmly anchored.

The hooks had caught in some fracture of the plateau which he could not see.

It was necessary to trust his life to that unknown support.

He did not hesitate.

The matter was urgent; he was compelled to take the shortest route.

Moreover, to descend again to the deck of the Durande in order to devise some other step was impossible. A slip was probable, and a fall almost certain. It was easier to climb than to descend.

Gilliatt's movements were decisive, as are those of all good sailors; he never wasted force; he always proportioned his efforts to the work in hand. Hence the prodigies of strength which he executed with

ordinary muscles. His biceps was no more powerful than that of ordinary men; but his heart was firmer. He added, in fact, to strength which is physical, energy which belongs to the moral faculties.

The feat to be accomplished was appalling.

It was to cross the space between the two Douvres, hanging only by this slender line.

Oftentimes in the path of duty and devotedness the figure of death rises before men to present the terrible question, "Wilt thou do this?"

Gilliatt tested the cord again; the grappling-iron held firm.

Wrapping his left hand in his handkerchief, he grasped the knotted cord with his right hand, which he covered with his left; then stretching out one foot, and striking out sharply with the other against the rock, in order that the impetus might prevent the rope twisting, he precipitated himself from the height of the Little Douvre on to the escarpment of the great one.

The shock was severe.

There was a rebound.

His clenched fists struck the rocks in their turn; the handkerchief had loosened, and they were scratched; they had indeed narrowly escaped being crushed.

Gilliatt remained hanging there a moment dizzy.

He was sufficiently master of himself not to let go his hold of the cord.

A few moments passed in jerks and oscillations before he could catch the cord with his feet; but he succeeded at last.

Recovering himself, and holding the cord at last between his naked feet as with two hands, he gazed into the depth below.

He had no anxiety about the length of the cord, which had many a time served him for great heights. The cord, in fact, trailed upon the deck of the Durande.

Assured of being able to descend again, he began to climb hand over hand, still clinging with his feet.

In a few moments he had gained the summit.

Never before had any creature without wings found a footing there. The plateau was covered in parts with the dung of birds. It was an irregular trapezium, — a mass struck off from the colossal granitic prism of the Great Douvre. This block was hollowed in the centre like a basin, — a work of the rain.

Gilliatt had not been mistaken in his conjectures.

At the southern angle of the block he found a mass of superimposed rocks, — probably fragments of the fallen summit. These rocks, looking like a heap of giant paving-stones, would have left room for a wild beast, if one could have found its way there, to secrete himself between them. They supported themselves confusedly one against the other, leaving interstices, like a heap of ruins. They formed neither grottos nor caves, but the pile was full of holes, like a sponge. One of these holes was large enough to admit a man.

This recess had a flooring of moss and a few tufts of grass. Gilliatt could fit himself in it as in a kind of sheath.

The recess at its entrance was about two feet high.

It contracted towards the farther end. Stone coffins sometimes have this form. The mass of rocks behind lying towards the southwest, the recess was sheltered from the showers, but was open to the cold north wind.

Gilliatt was satisfied with the place.

The two chief problems were solved, — the sloop had a harbor and he had found a shelter.

The chief merit of his cave was its accessibility from the wreck.

The grappling-iron of the knotted cord, having fallen between two blocks, had become firmly hooked, but Gilliatt made it more secure by rolling a huge stone upon it.

He was now free to operate at leisure upon the Durande.

Henceforth he was at home.

The Great Douvre was his dwelling; the Durande was his workshop.

Nothing was more simple for him than going to and fro, ascending and descending.

He dropped down easily by the knotted cord on to the deck.

The day's work was a good one, the enterprise had begun well; he was satisfied, and began to feel hungry.

He untied his basket of provisions, opened his knife, cut a slice of smoked beef, took a bite out of his brown loaf, drank a draught from his can of fresh water, and supped admirably.

To do well and eat well are two satisfactions. A full stomach resembles an easy conscience.

This supper was ended, and there was still before him a little more daylight. He took advantage of it to begin the lightening of the wreck, — an urgent necessity.

He had passed part of the day in gathering up the fragments. He put on one side, in the strong compartment which contained the machine, all that might become of use to him, — such as wood, iron, cordage, and canvas. What was useless he cast into the sea.

The cargo of the sloop hoisted on to the deck by the capstan, compact as he had made it, was an encumbrance. Gilliatt surveyed the species of niche, at a height within his reach, in the side of the Little Douvre. These natural closets, not shut in, it is true, are often seen in the rocks. It struck him that it was possible to trust some stores to this depot, and he accordingly placed in the back of the recess his two boxes containing his tools and his clothing, and his two bags holding the rye-meal and the biscuit. In the front — a little too near the edge perhaps, but he had no other place — he rested his basket of provisions.

He had taken care to remove from the box of clothing his sheepskin, his loose coat with a hood, and his waterproof overalls.

To lessen the hold of the wind upon the knotted cord, he made the lower extremity fast to one of the riders of the Durande.

The Durande being much driven in, this rider was bent a good deal, and it held the end of the cord as firmly as a tight hand.

There was still the difficulty of the upper end of

the cord. To control the lower part was well, but at the summit of the escarpment, at the spot where the knotted cord met the ridge of the plateau, there was reason to fear that it would be fretted and worn away by the sharp angle of the rock.

Gilliatt searched in the heap of rubbish in reserve, and took from it some rags of sail-cloth, and from a bunch of old cables he pulled out some strands of rope-yarn, with which he filled his pockets.

A sailor would have guessed that he intended to bind with these pieces of sail-cloth and ends of yarn the part of the knotted rope upon the edge of the rock, so as to preserve it from all friction, — an operation which is called "serving."

Having provided himself with these things, he drew on his overalls, put his waterproof coat over his jacket, drew its hood over his red cap, hung the sheepskin round his neck by the two legs, and clothed in this complete panoply, he grasped the cord, now firmly fixed to the side of the Great Douvre, and mounted to the assault of that sombre citadel in the sea.

In spite of his scratched hands, Gilliatt easily regained the summit.

The last pale tints of sunset were fading in the sky. It was night upon the sea below. A little light still lingered upon the height of the Douvre.

Gilliatt took advantage of the remains of daylight to bind the knotted rope. He wound it round again and again at the part which passed over the edge of the rock, with a bandage of several thicknesses of canvas strongly tied at every turn. The whole

resembled in some degree the padding which actresses place upon their knees, to prepare them for the agonies and supplications of the fifth act.

This binding completely accomplished, Gilliatt rose from his stooping position.

For some moments, while he had been busied in his task, he had had a confused sense of a singular fluttering in the air.

It resembled, in the silence of the evening, the noise which an immense bat might make with the beating of its wings.

Gilliatt raised his eyes.

A great dark circle was revolving over his head in the pale twilight sky.

Such circles are seen in pictures round the heads of saints. These, however, are golden on a dark ground, while the circle around Gilliatt was dark upon a pale ground. The effect was strange. It spread round the Great Douvre like the aureole of night.

The circle drew nearer, then retired; grew narrower, and then spread wide again.

It was an immense flight of gulls, seamews, and cormorants, — a vast multitude of affrighted seabirds.

The Great Douvre was probably their lodging, and they were coming to rest for the night. Gilliatt had taken a chamber in their home. It was evident that their unexpected fellow-lodger disturbed them.

A man there was an object they had never beheld before.

Their wild flutter continued for some time.

They seemed to be waiting for the stranger to leave the place.

Gilliatt followed them dreamily with his eyes.

The flying multitude seemed at last to give up their design. The circle suddenly took a spiral form, and the cloud of sea-birds came down upon The Man rock at the extremity of the group, where they seemed to be conferring and deliberating.

Gilliatt, after settling down in his alcove of granite, and covering a stone for a pillow for his head, could hear the birds for a long time chattering one after the other, or croaking, as if in turns.

Then they were silent, and all were sleeping, — the birds upon their rock, Gilliatt upon his.

CHAPTER VIII.

IMPORTUNÆQUE VOLUCRES.

GILLIATT slept well; but he was cold, and this awoke him from time to time. He had naturally placed his feet at the bottom, and his head at the entrance to his cave. He had not taken the precaution to remove from his couch a number of angular stones, which did not by any means conduce to sleep.

Now and then he half opened his eyes.

At intervals he heard loud noises. It was the rising tide entering the caverns of the rocks with a sound like the report of a cannon.

All the circumstances of his position conspired to produce the effect of a vision. Hallucinations seemed to surround him. The vagueness of night increased this effect; and Gilliatt felt himself plunged into some region of unrealities. He asked himself if all were not a dream.

Then he dropped to sleep again; and this time, in a veritable dream, found himself at Le Bû de la Rue, at Les Bravées, at St. Sampson. He heard Déruchette singing; he was among realities. While he slept he seemed to wake and live; when he awoke again he appeared to be sleeping.

In truth, from this time forward he lived in a dream.

Towards the middle of the night a confused murmur filled the air. Gilliatt had a vague consciousness of it even in his sleep. It was perhaps a breeze arising.

Once, when awakened by a cold shiver, he opened his eyes a little wider than before. Clouds were moving in the zenith; the moon was flying through the sky, with one large star following close after her.

Gilliatt's mind was full of the incidents of his dreams. The wild outlines of things in the darkness were exaggerated by this confusion with the impressions of his sleeping hours.

At daybreak he was half frozen; but he slept soundly.

The sudden daylight aroused him from a slumber which might have been dangerous. The alcove faced the rising sun.

Gilliatt yawned, stretched himself, and sprang out of his sleeping-place.

His sleep had been so deep that he could not at first recall the circumstances of the night before.

By degrees the feeling of reality returned, and he began to think of breakfast.

The weather was calm; the sky cool and serene. The clouds were gone; the night wind had cleared the horizon, and the sun rose brightly. Another fine day was commencing. Gilliatt felt joyful.

He threw off his overcoat and his leggings; rolled them up in the sheepskin with the wool inside, fast-

ened the roll with a length of rope-yarn, and pushed it into the cavern for a shelter in case of rain.

This done, he made his bed, — an operation which consisted in removing the stones which had annoyed him in the night.

His bed made, he slid down the cord on to the deck of the Durande and approached the niche where he had placed his basket of provisions. As he had left it very near the edge, the wind in the night had swept it down, and rolled it into the sea.

It was evident that it would not be easy to recover it. There was a spirit of mischief and malice in a wind which had sought out his basket in that position.

It was the commencement of hostilities. Gilliatt understood the token.

To those who live in a state of rude familiarity with the sea, it becomes natural to regard the wind as an individuality and the rocks as sentient beings.

Nothing remained but the biscuit and the rye-meal, except the shell-fish, on which the shipwrecked sailor had supported a lingering existence upon The Man rock.

It was useless to think of subsisting by net or line fishing. Fish do not like to be disturbed, and are naturally averse to the neighborhood of rocks. The drag and bow net fishers would waste their labor among the breakers, the points of which would be destructive only to their nets.

Gilliatt breakfasted on a few limpets which he plucked with difficulty from the rocks. He narrowly escaped breaking his knife in the attempt.

While he was making his spare meal he was sensible of a strange disturbance on the sea. He looked around.

It was a swarm of gulls and seamews which had just alighted upon some low rocks, and were beating their wings, tumbling over one another, screaming, and calling. All were swarming noisily upon the same point. This horde with beaks and talons were evidently pillaging something.

It was Gilliatt's basket.

Rolled down upon a sharp point by the wind, the basket had burst open. The birds had flocked to it immediately. They were carrying off in their beaks all sorts of fragments of provisions. Gilliatt recognized from the distance his smoked beef and his salted fish.

It was their turn now to be aggressive. The birds had taken to reprisals. Gilliatt had robbed them of their lodging; they deprived him of his supper.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROCK, AND HOW GILLIATT USED IT.

A WEEK passed.

Although it was in the rainy season no rain fell, a fact for which Gilliatt felt thankful. But the work he had entered upon surpassed, in appearance at least, the power of human hand or skill. Success appeared so improbable that the attempt seemed like madness.

It is not until a task is fairly grappled with that its difficulties and perils become fully manifest. There is nothing like making a beginning for making evident how difficult it will be to come to the end. Every beginning is a struggle against resistance. The first step undeceives us inexorably. A difficulty which we come to touch pricks like a thorn.

Gilliatt found himself immediately in the presence of obstacles.

In order to raise the engine of the Durande from the wreck, in which it was three fourths buried, with any chance of success, — in order to accomplish the salvage in such a place and in such a season, it seemed almost necessary to be a legion of men; Gilliatt was alone. A complete apparatus of carpenters' and engineers' tools and implements was

wanted; Gilliatt had a saw, a hatchet, a chisel, and a hammer. He wanted both a good workshop and a good shed; Gilliatt had not a roof to cover him. Provisions, too, were necessary, but he had not even bread.

Any one who could have seen him working on the rock during all that first week might have been puzzled to determine the nature of his operations. He seemed to be no longer thinking either of the Durande or the two Douvres. He was busy only among the breakers, and seemed absorbed in saving the smaller parts of the shipwreck. He took advantage of every high tide to strip the reefs of everything which the shipwreck had distributed among them. He went from rock to rock, picking up whatever the sea had scattered, — tatters of sail-cloth, pieces of iron, splinters of panels, shattered planking, broken yards, — here a beam, there a chain, there a pulley.

At the same time he carefully surveyed all the recesses of the rocks. To his great disappointment none were habitable. He had suffered from the cold in the night, where he lodged between the stones on the summit of the Great Douvre, and he would gladly have found some better refuge.

Two of those recesses were quite spacious. Although the natural pavement of rock was almost everywhere oblique and uneven, it was possible to stand upright, and even to walk within them. The wind and the rain wandered there at will, but the highest tides did not reach them. They were near the Little Douvre, and were approachable at any

time. Gilliatt decided that one should serve him as a storehouse, the other as a forge.

With all the sail, rope-bands, and all the reef-earrings he could collect, he made packages of the fragments of wreck, tying up the wood and iron in bundles and the canvas in parcels. He lashed all these together carefully. As the rising tide approached these packages he began to drag them across the reefs to his storehouse. In a hollow of the rocks he had found a top-rope, by means of which he had been able to haul even the large pieces of timber. In the same manner he dragged from the sea the numerous portions of chains which he found scattered among the breakers.

Gilliatt worked at these tasks with astonishing activity and tenacity. He accomplished whatever he attempted, — nothing could withstand his ant-like perseverance.

At the end of the week he had gathered into this granite warehouse of marine stores and ranged into order all the shapeless bric-à-brac left by the tempest. There was a corner for the tacks of sails and a corner for sheets. Bowlines were not mixed with halliards; parrels were arranged according to their number of holes. The coverings of rope-yarn, unwound from the broken anchor-rings, were tied in bunches; the dead-eyes without pulleys were separated from the tackle-blocks. Belaying-pins, bulls-eyes, preventer-shrouds, down-hauls, snatch-blocks, pendents, kevels, trusses, stoppers, sailbooms, if they were not completely damaged by the storm, occupied different compartments. All the cross-beams, timber-work, up-

rights, stanchions, mast-heads, binding-strakes, port-lids, and clamps were heaped up apart. Wherever it was possible he had fixed the fragments of planks from the vessel's bottom one in the other. There was no confusion between reef-points and nippers of the cable; nor of crow's-feet with tow-lines; nor of pulleys of the small with pulleys of the large ropes; nor of fragments from the waist with fragments from the stern. A place had been reserved for a portion of the cat-harpings of the Durande, which had supported the shrouds of the top-mast and the futtock-shrouds. Every portion had its place. The entire wreck was there classed and ticketed. It was a sort of chaos in a storehouse.

A stay-sail, fixed by huge stones, served, though torn and damaged, to protect what the rain might have injured.

Shattered as were the bows of the wreck, he had succeeded in saving the two cat-heads with their three pulley-wheels.

He had found the bowsprit too, and had had much trouble in unrolling its gammoning; it was very hard and tight, having been, according to custom, made by the help of the windlass, and in dry weather. Gilliatt, however, persevered until he had detached it, this thick rope promising to be very useful to him.

He had been equally successful in discovering the little anchor which had become fast in the hollow of a reef, where the receding tide had left it uncovered.

In what had been Tangrouille's cabin, he had

found a piece of chalk, which he preserved carefully. He reflected that he might have some marks to make.

A fire-bucket and several pails in pretty good condition completed this stock of working-materials.

All that remained of the store of coal of the Durande he carried into the warehouse.

In a week this salvage of débris was finished; the rock was swept clean, and the Durande was lightened. Nothing remained now to burden the hull except the machinery.

The portion of the fore-side bulwarks which hung to it did not distress the hull. The mass hung without dragging, being sustained by a ledge of rock. It was, however, large and broad, and heavy to drag, and would have encumbered his warehouse too much. This bulwarking looked something like a boat-builder's stocks. Gilliatt left it where it was.

He had been profoundly thoughtful during all this labor. He had sought in vain for the figure-head — the "doll," as the Guernsey folks called it — of the Durande. It was one of the things which the waves had carried away forever. Gilliatt would have given his hands to find it, — if he had not had such peculiar need of them at that time.

At the entrance to the storehouse and outside were two heaps of refuse, — a heap of iron good for forging, and a heap of wood good for burning.

Gilliatt was always at work at early dawn. Except his time of sleep, he did not take a moment of repose.

The wild sea-birds, flying hither and thither, watched him at his work.

CHAPTER X.

THE FORGE.

THE warehouse completed, Gilliatt constructed his forge.

The other recess which he had chosen had within it a species of passage like a gallery in a mine of pretty good depth. He had had at first an idea of making this his lodging; but the draught was so continuous and so persevering in this passage that he had been compelled to give it up. This current of air, incessantly renewed, first gave him the notion of the forge. Since it could not be his chamber, he was determined that this cabin should be his smithy. To bend obstacles to our purpose is a great step towards triumph. The wind was Gilliatt's enemy; he set about making it his servant.

The proverb applied to certain kinds of men, "fit for everything, good for nothing," may also be applied to the hollows of rocks. They give no advantages gratuitously. On one side we find a hollow fashioned conveniently in the shape of a bath, but it allows the water to run away through a fissure; here is a rocky chamber, but without a roof; here a bed of moss, but oozy with wet; here an arm-chair, but one of hard stone.

The forge which Gilliatt intended was roughly sketched out by Nature: but nothing could be more troublesome than to reduce this rough sketch to manageable shape, to transform this cavern into a laboratory and smith's shop. With three or four large rocks, shaped like a funnel and ending in a narrow fissure, chance had constructed there a species of vast ill-shapen blower, of very different power from those huge old forge-bellows of fourteen feet long, which poured out at every breath ninety-eight thousand inches of air. This was quite a different sort of construction. The proportions of the hurricane cannot be definitely measured.

This excess of force was an embarrassment. The incessant draught was difficult to regulate.

The cavern had two inconveniences: the wind traversed it from end to end; so did the water.

This was not the water of the sea, but a continual little trickling stream, more like a spring than a torrent.

The foam, cast incessantly by the surf upon the rocks, and sometimes more than a hundred feet in the air, had filled with sea-water a natural cave situated among the high rocks overlooking the excavation. The overflowings of this reservoir caused, a a little behind the escarpment, a fall of water of about an inch in breadth, and descending four or five fathoms. An occasional contribution from the rains also helped to fill the reservoir. From time to time a passing cloud dropped a shower into the rocky basin, always overflowing. The water was

brackish and unfit to drink, but clear. This rill of water fell in graceful drops from the extremities of the long marine grasses, as from the ends of a head of hair.

He was struck with the idea of making this water serve to regulate the draught in the cave. By the means of a funnel made of planks roughly and hastily put together to form two or three pipes, one of which was fitted with a valve, and of a large tub arranged as a lower reservoir, without checks or counterweight, and completed solely by air-tight stuffing above and air-holes below, Gilliatt, who, as we have already said, was handy at the forge and at the mechanic's bench, succeeded in constructing, instead of the forge-bellows, which he did not possess, an apparatus less perfect than what is known nowadays by the name of a *cagniardelle*, but less rude than what the people of the Pyrenees anciently called a *trompe*.

He had rye-meal, and he manufactured with it some paste. He had also some white rope which he picked out into tow. With this paste and tow and some bits of wood he stopped all the crevices of the rock, leaving only a little air-passage made of a powder-flask which he had found aboard the Durande, and which had served for loading the signal-gun. This powder-flask was directed horizontally to a large stone, which Gilliatt made the hearth of the forge. A stopper made of a piece of tow served to close it in case of need.

After this he heaped up the wood and coal upon the hearth, struck his steel against the bare rock, caught

a spark upon a handful of loose tow, and having ignited it, soon lighted his forge-fire.

He tried the blower: it worked well.

Gilliatt felt the pride of a Cyclops: he was the master of air, water, and fire, — master of the air, for he had given a kind of lungs to the wind and changed the rude draught into a useful blower; master of water, for he had converted the little cascade into a *trompe;* master of fire, for out of this moist rock he had struck a flame.

The cave being almost everywhere open to the sky, the smoke issued freely, blackening the curved escarpment. The rocks, which seemed destined forever to receive only the white foam, became now familiar with the blackening smoke.

Gilliatt selected for an anvil a large smooth round stone of great density, and of about the required shape and dimensions. It formed a base for the blows of his hammer, but an uncertain one, and very dangerous. One of the extremities of this block, rounded and ending in a point, might, for want of anything better, serve instead of a conoidal bicorn; but the bicorn of the pyramidal form was wanting. It was the ancient stone anvil of the Troglodytes. The surface, polished by the waves, had almost the firmness of steel.

He regretted not having brought his anvil. As he did not know that the Durande had been broken in two by the tempest, he had hoped to find the carpenter's chest and all his tools, generally kept in the fore hold. But it was precisely the fore part of the vessel which had been carried away.

These two excavations which he had found in the rock were contiguous. The warehouse and the forge communicated with each other.

Every evening when his work was ended he supped on a little biscuit, moistened in water, a sea-urchin or a crab, or a few *châtaignes de mer*, — the only food to be found among those rocks, — and, shivering like his knotted cord, mounted again to sleep in his cell upon the Great Douvre.

The very materialism of his daily occupation increased the kind of abstraction in which he lived. To be steeped too deeply in realities is in itself a cause of visionary moods. His bodily labor, with its infinite variety of details, detracted nothing from the sensation of stupor which arose from the strangeness of his position and his work. Ordinary bodily fatigue is a thread which binds man to the earth; but the very peculiarity of the enterprise he was engaged in kept him in a sort of ideal twilight region. There were times when he seemed to be striking blows with his hammer in the clouds. At other moments his tools appeared to him like arms. He had a singular feeling, as if he was repressing or providing against some latent danger of attack. Untwisting ropes, unravelling threads of yarn in a sail, or propping up a couple of beams, appeared to him at such times like fashioning engines of war. The thousand minute pains which he took about his salvage operations produced at last in his mind the effect of precautions against aggressions little concealed and easy to anticipate. He did not know the words which express the ideas, but he perceived them. His instincts be-

came less and less those of the worker, his habits more and more those of the savage man.

His business there was to subdue and direct the powers of Nature. He had an indistinct perception of it, — a strange enlargement of his ideas!

Around him, far as eye could reach, was the vast prospect of endless labor wasted and lost. Nothing is more disturbing to the mind than the contemplation of the diffusion of forces at work in the unfathomable and illimitable space of the ocean. The mind tends naturally to seek the object of these forces. The unceasing movement in space, the unwearying sea, the clouds that seem ever hurrying somewhere, the vast mysterious prodigality of effort, — all this is a problem. Whither does this perpetual movement tend? What do these winds construct? What do these giant blows build up? These howlings, shocks, and sobbings of the storm, what do they end in; and what is the business of this tumult? The ebb and flow of these questionings is eternal as the flux and reflux of the sea itself. Gilliatt could answer for himself; his work he knew, but the agitation which surrounded him far and wide at all times perplexed him confusedly with its eternal questionings. Unknown to himself, mechanically, by the mere pressure of external things, and without any other effect than a strange, unconscious bewilderment, Gilliatt, in this dreamy mood, blended his own toil somehow with the prodigious wasted labor of the sea-waves. How indeed, in that position, could he escape the influence of that mystery of the dread, laborious ocean; what could he do but meditate, so

far as meditation was possible, upon the vacillation of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the imperceptible wearing down of rocks, the furious beatings of the four winds? How terrible that perpetual recommencement, that ocean-bed, those Danaïdes-like clouds, all that travail and weariness for no end!

For no end? Not so! But for what? O Thou Infinite Unknown, Thou only knowest!

CHAPTER XI.

DISCOVERY.

A ROCK near the coast is sometimes visited by men; a rock in mid-ocean never. What object could any one have there? No supplies can be drawn thence; no fruit-trees are there, no pasturage, no beasts, no springs of water fitted for man's use. It stands aloft, a rock with its steep sides and summits above water, and its sharp points below. Nothing is to be found there but inevitable shipwreck.

This kind of rocks, which in the old sea dialect were called *Isolés*, are, as we have said, strange places. The sea is alone there; she works her own will. No token of terrestrial life disturbs her. Man is a terror to the sea; she is shy of his approach, and hides from him her deeds. But she is bolder among the lone sea rocks. The everlasting soliloquy of the waves is not troubled there. She labors at the rocks, repairs their damage, sharpens their peaks, makes them rugged or renews them. She pierces the granite, wears down the soft stone, and denudes the hard; she rummages, dismembers, bores, perforates, and grooves; she fills the rock with cells, and makes it sponge-like, hollows out the inside, or sculptures it without. In that secret mountain

which is hers, she makes to herself caves, sanctuaries, palaces. She has her splendid and monstrous vegetation, composed of floating plants which bite, and of monsters which take root; and she hides away all this terrible magnificence in the twilight of her deeps. Among the isolated rocks no eye watches over her; no spy embarrasses her movements. It is here that she develops at liberty her mysterious side, which is inaccessible to man; here she keeps all her horrible secretions of life; here the unknown wonders of the sea are assembled.

Promontories, forelands, capes, headlands, breakers, and shoals are veritable constructions. The geological changes of the earth are trifling compared with the vast operations of the ocean. These breakers, these habitations in the sea, these pyramids and spouts of the foam are the practisers of a mysterious art which the author of this book has somewhere called The Art of Nature. Their style is known by its vastness. The effects of chance seem here design. Its works are multiform. They abound in the mazy entanglement of the rock-coral groves, the sublimity of the cathedral, the extravagance of the pagoda, the amplitude of the mountain, the delicacy of the jeweller's work, the horror of the sepulchre. They are filled with cells like the wasps' nest, with dens like menageries, with subterranean passages like the haunts of moles, with dungeons like Bastiles, with ambuscades like a camp. They have their doors, but they are barricaded; their columns, but they are shattered; their towers, but they are tottering; their bridges, but they are broken. Their compartments

are unaccommodating; these are fitted for the birds only, those only for fish. They are impassable. Their architectural style is variable and inconsistent; it regards or disregards at will the laws of equilibrium, breaks off, stops short, begins in the form of an archivolt, and ends in an architrave, block on block. Enceladus is the mason. A wondrous science of dynamics exhibits here its problems ready solved. Fearful overhanging blocks threaten, but fall not: the human mind cannot guess what power supports their bewildering masses. Blind entrances, gaps, and ponderous suspensions multiply and vary infinitely. The laws which regulate this Babel baffle human induction. The great unknown Architect plans nothing, but succeeds in all. Rocks massed together in confusion form a monstrous monument, defy reason, yet maintain equilibrium. Here is something more than strength; it is eternity. But order is wanting. The wild tumult of the waves seems to have passed into the wilderness of stone. It is like a tempest petrified. Nothing is more impressive than that wild architecture; always standing, yet always seeming to fall; in which everything appears to give support, and yet to withdraw it. A struggle between opposing lines has resulted in the construction of an edifice, filled with traces of the efforts of those old antagonists, the ocean and the storm.

This architecture has its terrible masterpieces, of which the Douvres rock was one.

The sea had fashioned and perfected it with a sinister solicitude. The snarling waters licked it into

shape. It was hideous, treacherous, dark, full of hollows.

It had a complete system of submarine caverns ramifying and losing themselves in unfathomed depths. Some of the orifices of this labyrinth of passages were left exposed by the low tides. A man might enter there, but at his risk and peril.

Gilliatt determined to explore all these grottos, for the purpose of his salvage labor. There was not one which was not repulsive. Everywhere about the caverns that strange aspect of an abattoir, those singular traces of slaughter, appeared again in all the exaggeration of the ocean. No one who has not seen in excavations of this kind, upon the walls of everlasting granite, these hideous natural frescos, can form a notion of their singularity.

These pitiless caverns, too, were false and sly. Woe betide him who would loiter there. The rising tide filled them to their roofs.

Rock limpets and edible mosses abounded among them.

They were obstructed by quantities of shingle, heaped together in their recesses. Some of their huge smooth stones weighed more than a ton. They were of every proportion, and of every hue; but the greater part were blood-colored. Some, covered with a hairy and glutinous seaweed, seemed like large green moles boring a way into the rock.

Several of the caverns terminated abruptly in the form of a demi-cupola. Others, main arteries of a mysterious circulation, lengthened out in the rock in dark and tortuous fissures. They were the alleys of

the submarine city; but they gradually contracted from their entrances, and at length left no way for a man to pass. Peering in by the help of a lighted torch, Gilliatt could see nothing but dark hollows dripping with moisture.

One day, exploring, he ventured into one of these fissures. The state of the tide favored the attempt. It was a beautiful day of calm and sunshine. There was no fear of any accident from the sea to increase the danger.

Two necessities, as we have said, compelled him to undertake these explorations. He had to gather fragments of wreck and other things to aid him in his labor, and to search for crabs and crayfish for his food. Shell-fish had begun to fail him on the rocks.

The fissure was narrow and the passage difficult. Gilliatt could see daylight beyond. He made an effort, contorted himself as much as he could, and penetrated into the cave as far as he was able.

He had reached without suspecting it the interior of the rock upon the point of which Clubin had steered the Durande. Though abrupt and almost inaccessible without, it was hollowed within. It was full of galleries, pits, and chambers, like the tomb of an Egyptian king. This network of caverns was one of the most complicated of all that labyrinth, a labor of the water, the undermining of the restless sea. The branches of the subterranean maze probably communicated with the sea without by more than one issue, some gaping at the level of the waves, the others funnel-like, deep, and invisible. It was neai

here that Clubin had dived into the sea, but Gilliatt did not know this.

In this crocodile cave — where crocodiles, it is true, were not among the dangers — Gilliatt wound about, clambered, struck his head occasionally, bent low and rose again, lost his footing and regained it many times, advancing laboriously. By degrees the gallery widened; a glimmer of daylight appeared, and he found himself suddenly at the entrance to a cavern of a singular kind.

CHAPTER XII.

THE INTERIOR OF AN EDIFICE UNDER THE SEA.

THE gleam of daylight came in time.

One step farther, and Gilliatt must have fallen into a pool, perhaps without bottom. The waters of these cavern pools are so cold and paralyzing as to prove fatal to the strongest swimmers.

There is, moreover, no means of remounting or of hanging on to any part of their steep walls.

He stopped short. The crevice from which he had just issued ended in a narrow and slippery projection, — a species of corbel in the peaked wall. He leaned against the side and surveyed it.

He was in a large cave. Over his head was a roofing not unlike the inside of a vast skull, which one might imagine to have been recently dissected. The dripping ribs of the striated indentations of the roof seemed to imitate the branching fibres and jagged sutures of the bony cranium. It had a stony ceiling and a watery floor. The rippled waters between the four walls of the cave were like wavy paving-tiles. The grotto was shut in on all sides: not a window, not even an air-hole visible; no breach in the wall, no crack in the roof. The light came from below and through the water, — a strange, sombre light.

Gilliatt, the pupils of whose eyes had contracted during his explorations of the dusky corridor, could distinguish everything about him in the pale glimmer.

He was familiar, from having often visited them, with the caves of Plémont in Jersey, the Creux-Maillé at Guernsey, the Boutiques at Sark, so named because the smugglers used to deposit their goods there; but none of these marvellous caverns could compare with the subterranean and submarine chamber into which he had made his way.

Under the water at his feet he could see a sort of drowned arch. This arch, a natural ogive, fashioned by the waves, was glittering between its two dark and profound supports. It was by this submerged porch that the daylight entered into the cavern from the open sea, — a strange light shooting upward from a gulf.

The glimmer spread out beneath the waters like a large fan, and was reflected on the rocks. Its direct rays, divided into long, broad shafts, appeared in strong relief against the darkness below, and becoming brighter or more dull from one rock to another, looked as if seen here and there through plates of glass. There was light in that cave, it is true; but it was the light that was unearthly. The beholder might have dreamed that he had descended into some other planet. The glimmer was an enigma, like the glaucous light from the eye-pupil of a Sphinx. The whole cave represented the interior of a death's-head of enormous proportions, and of a strange splendor. The vault was the hollow of the brain, the arch the mouth; the sockets of the eyes were

wanting. The cavern, alternately swallowing and rendering up the flow and ebb of the tide through its mouth wide open to the full noonday without, seemed to drink in the light and vomit forth bitterness, — a type of some beings intelligent and evil. The light, in traversing this inlet through the vitreous medium of the sea-water, became green like a ray of starlight from Aldebaran. The water, filled with the moist light, appeared like a liquid emerald. A tint of aqua-marina of marvellous delicacy spread a soft hue throughout the cavern. The roof, with its cerebral lobes and its rampant ramifications, like the fibres of nerves, gave out a tender reflection of chrysoprase. The ripples reflected on the roof were falling in order and dissolving again incessantly, and enlarging and contracting their glittering scales in a mysterious and mazy dance. They gave the beholder an impression of something weird and spectral: he wondered what prey secured, or what expectation about to be realized, moved with a joyous thrill this magnificent network of living fire. From the projections of the vault and the angles of the rock hung lengths of delicate fibrous plants, bathing their roots probably through the granite in some upper pool of water, and distilling from their silky ends, one after the other, a drop of water like a pearl. These drops fell in the water now and then with a gentle splash. The effect of the scene was singular. Nothing more beautiful could be imagined; nothing more mournful could anywhere be found.

It was a wondrous palace, in which Death sat smiling and content.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT WAS SEEN THERE, AND WHAT PERCEIVED DIMLY.

A PLACE of shade, which yet was dazzling to the eyes, — such was this surprising cavern.

The beating of the sea made itself felt throughout the cavern. The oscillation without raised and depressed the level of the waters within with the regularity of respiration. A mysterious spirit seemed to fill this great organism, as it swelled and subsided in silence.

The water had a magical transparency, and Gilliatt distinguished at various depths submerged recesses, and surfaces of jutting rocks ever of a deeper and a deeper green. Certain dark hollows, too, were there, — probably too deep for soundings.

On each side of the submarine porch, rude elliptical arches, filled with shadows, indicated the position of small lateral caves, — low alcoves of the central cavern, accessible perhaps at very low tide. These openings had roofs in the form of inclined planes, and at angles more or less acute. Little sandy beaches of a few feet wide, laid bare by the action of the water, stretched inward, and were lost in these recesses.

Here and there sea-weeds of more than six feet in length undulated beneath the water, like the waving of long tresses in the wind; and there were glimpses of a forest of sea-plants.

Above and below the surface of the water the wall of the cavern from top to bottom — from the vault down to the depth at which it became invisible — was tapestried with that prodigious efflorescence of the sea, rarely perceived by human eyes, which the old Spanish navigators called *praderias del mar*. A luxuriant moss, having all the tints of the olive, enlarged and concealed the protuberances of granite. From all the jutting points swung the thin fluted strips of *varech*, which sailors use as their barometers. The light breath which stirred in the cavern waved to and fro their glossy bands.

Under these vegetations there showed themselves from time to time some of the rarest *bijoux* of the casket of the ocean, — ivory shells, strombi, purple-fish, univalves, struthiolaires, turriculated cerites. The bell-shaped limpet shells, like tiny huts, were everywhere adhering to the rocks, distributed in settlements, in the alleys between which prowled oscabrions, — those beetles of the sea. A few large pebbles found their way into the cavern; shell-fish took refuge there. The crustacea are the grandees of the sea, who in their lacework and embroidery avoid the rude contact of the pebbly crowd. The glittering heap of their shells, in certain spots under the wave, gave out singular irradiations, amid which the eye caught glimpses of confused azure and gold, and mother-of-pearl of every tint of the water.

Upon the side of the cavern, a little above the water-line, a magnificent and singular plant, attaching itself like a fringe to the border of seaweed, continued and completed it. This plant, thick, fibrous, inextricably intertwined, and almost black, exhibited to the eye large confused and dusky festoons, everywhere dotted with innumerable little flowers of the color of lapis-lazuli. In the water they seemed to glow like small blue flames. Out of the water they were flowers; beneath it they were sapphires. The water rising and inundating the basement of the grotto clothed with these plants seemed to cover the rock with gems.

At every swelling of the wave these flowers increased in splendor, and at every subsidence grew dull again. So is it with the destiny of man, — aspiration is life; expiration is death.

One of the marvels of the cavern was the rock itself. Forming here a wall, there an arch, and here again a pillar or pilaster, it was in places rough and bare, and sometimes, close beside, was wrought with the most delicate natural carving. Strange evidences of mind mingled with the massive stolidity of the granite. It was the wondrous art-work of the ocean. Here a sort of panel, cut square, and covered with round embossments in various positions, simulated a vague bas-relief. Before this sculpture, with its obscure designs, a man might have dreamed of Prometheus roughly sketching for Michael Angelo. It seemed as if that great genius with a few blows of his mallet could have finished the indistinct labors of the giant. In other places the rock was damasked

like a Saracen buckler, or engraved like a Florentine vase. There were portions which appeared like Corinthian brass, then like arabesques, as on the door of a mosque; then like runic stones with obscure and mystic prints of claws. Plants with twisted creepers and tendrils, crossing and recrossing upon the groundwork of golden lichens, covered it with filigree. The grotto resembled in some wise a Moorish palace. It was a union of barbarism and of goldsmith's work, with the imposing and rugged architecture of the elements.

The magnificent stains and moulderings of the sea covered as with velvet the angles of granite. The escarpments were festooned with large-flowered bindweed, sustaining itself with graceful ease, and ornamenting the walls as by intelligent design. Wall-pellitories showed their strange clusters in tasteful arrangement. Every species of coquetry possible to a cavern was there. The wondrous light which came from beneath the water — at once a submarine twilight and an Elysian radiance — softened down and blended all harsh lineaments. Every wave was a prism. The outlines of things under these rainbow-tinted undulations produced the chromatic effects of optical glasses made too convex. Solar spectra shot through the waters. Fragments of rainbows seemed floating in that transparent dawn. Elsewhere, in other corners, there was discernible a kind of moonlight in the water. Every kind of splendor seemed to mingle there, forming a strange sort of twilight. Nothing could be more perplexing or enigmatical than the sumptuous beauties of this cavern. En-

chantment reigned over all. The fantastic vegetation and the rude masonry of the place seemed to harmonize.

This savage union was a happy one. Rock and vegetation supported each other in all their windings, though they seemed scarcely to touch. The caress of the savage rock and the tawny flower was a strong one. These frail and quivering garlands furnished capitals and ligatures for the massive columns; they seemed like fairy fingers clasping the feet of behemoths; the rock supported the plant, the plant clung to the rock, and the embrace was graceful yet terrible.

Resulting from the two deformities thus mysteriously united, sprang beauty, sovereign and indescribable. The works of Nature, not less supreme than those of genius, are absolute and imposing. Their unexpectedness commands and wins the instant obedience of the human mind; we feel in their unexpectedness premeditation, whose meaning we cannot grasp, and Nature never startles us more than when in some work of hers the terrible gives birth to the exquisite.

This strange grotto was, if we may be permitted the expression, "siderealized." The mind was stupefied there by the power of the unforeseen, and yielded to it. The light that filled this crypt was the light of the apocalypse. Was the cave some creation of the mind, or had it an existence of its own? To the eyes it seemed a reality teeming with things impossible, — a reality tangible, apparent, yet difficult to be believed in.

Was it daylight which entered by this casement beneath the sea? Was it indeed water which trembled in this dusky pool? Were not these arched roofs and porches fashioned out of sunset clouds to imitate a cavern to men's eyes? What stone was that beneath the feet? Was not this solid shaft about to melt and pass into thin air? What was that cunning jewelry of glittering shells, half seen beneath the wave? How far away were life, and the green earth, and human faces? What strange enchantment haunted that mystic twilight? What blind emotion, mingling its sympathies with the uneasy restlessness of plants beneath the wave?

At the extremity of the cavern, which was oblong, rose a Cyclopean archivolt, singularly exact in form. It was a species of cave within a cave, of tabernacle within a sanctuary. Here, behind a sheet of bright verdure, interposed like the veil of a temple, arose a stone out of the waves, having square sides, and bearing some resemblance to an altar. The water surrounded it on all sides. It seemed as if a goddess had just descended from it. One might have dreamed there that some celestial form beneath that crypt or upon that altar dwelt forever pensive in naked beauty, but grew invisible at the approach of mortals. It was hard to conceive that majestic chamber without a vision within. The day-dream of the intruder might evoke again the marvellous apparition. A flood of chaste light falling upon white shoulders scarcely seen; a forehead bathed with the light of dawn; an Olympian visage oval-shaped; a bust full of mysterious grace; arms modestly droop-

ing; tresses unloosened in the aurora; a body delicately modelled of pure whiteness, half-wrapped in a sacred cloud, with the glance of a virgin; a Venus rising from the sea, or Eve issuing from chaos, — such was the dream which filled the mind.

Perhaps at that moment divine nakedness reposed on this very altar. Upon this pedestal whence emanated unspeakable ecstasy might be pictured a white radiance, a goddess, alive, erect. The mind saw in the midst of the mute adoration of this cavern, an Amphitrite, a Tethys, some Diana capable of loving, some ideal statue sprung from the radiance, and gazing into darkness with a smile. It was she who even in her flight had illumined the cavern, had filled it with the perfume and light that proceeded from her astral body. The dazzling phantom was no longer there; the form, only visible perhaps to invisible eyes, could no longer be perceived, yet her presence was still felt, awakening desire. The goddess was gone, but divinity remained.

The beauty of the recess seemed made for this celestial presence. It was for the sake of this deity, this fairy of the pearl caverns, this queen of the Zephyrs, this Grace born of the waves, it was for her — as the mind at least imagined — that this subterranean dwelling had been thus religiously walled in, so that nothing might ever trouble the reverent shadows and the majestic silence round about that divine spirit.

Gilliatt, who was a kind of seer amid the secrets of Nature, stood there musing, and sensible of confused emotions.

Suddenly, at a few feet below him, in the delightful transparence of that water like liquid jewels, he became sensible of the approach of something of mystic shape. A species of long ragged band was moving amid the oscillation of the waves. It did not float, but darted about of its own will. It had an object; was advancing somewhere rapidly. The object had something of the form of a jester's bauble with points, which hung flabby and undulating. It seemed covered with a dust incapable of being washed away by the water. It was more than horrible; it was foul. The beholder felt that it was something monstrous. It was a living thing; unless, indeed, it were but an illusion. It seemed to be seeking the darker portion of the cavern where at last it vanished. The heavy shadows grew darker as its sinister form glided into them and disappeared.

BOOK II.

THE TASK.

CHAPTER I.

THE RESOURCES OF ONE WHO HAS NOTHING.

THE cavern did not easily part with its explorers. The entry had been difficult; going back was more difficult still. Gilliatt, however, succeeded in extricating himself; but he did not return there. He had found nothing that he was in quest of, and he had not the time to indulge curiosity.

He put the forge in operation at once. Tools were wanting; he set to work and made them.

For fuel he had the wreck, for motive force the water, for his bellows the wind, for his anvil a stone, for art his instinct, for power his will.

He entered with ardor upon his sombre labors.

The weather seemed to smile upon his work. It continued to be dry, and free from equinoctial gales. The month of March had come, but it was tranquil. The days grew longer. The blue of the sky, the gentleness of all the movements of the scene, the serenity of the noontide, seemed to exclude the idea of mischief. The waves danced merrily in the sunlight. A Judas kiss is the first step to treachery; of such

caresses the ocean is prodigal. Her smile, like that of a woman, sometimes cannot be trusted.

There was little wind. The hydraulic bellows worked all the better for that reason. Much wind would have embarrassed rather than aided it. Gilliatt had a saw; he manufactured for himself a file. With the saw he attacked the wood, with the file the metal. Then he availed himself of the two iron hands of the smith, — the pincers and the pliers. The pincers gripe, the pliers handle; the one is like the closed hand, the other like the fingers. By degrees he made for himself a number of auxiliaries, and constructed his armor. With a piece of hoop-wood he made a screen for his forge-fire.

One of his principal labors was the sorting and repair of pulleys. He mended both the blocks and the sheaves of tackle. He cut down the irregularities of all broken joists, and reshaped the extremities. He had, as we have said, for the necessities of his carpentry a quantity of pieces of wood stored away, and arranged according to the forms, the dimensions, and the nature of their grain, — the oak on one side, the pine on the other; the short pieces like riders separated from the straight pieces like binding strakes. This formed his reserve of supports and levers, of which he might stand in great need at any moment.

Any one who intends to construct hoisting tackle ought to provide himself with beams and small cables. But that is not sufficient; he must have cordage. Gilliatt restored the cables, large and small. He frayed out the tattered sails, and succeeded in converting

them into an excellent yarn, of which he made twine. With this he joined the ropes. The joints, however, were liable to rot. It was necessary, therefore, to hasten to make use of these cables. He had only been able to make white tow, for he was without tar.

The ropes mended, he proceeded to repair the chains.

Thanks to the lateral point of the stone anvil, which served the part of the conoidal bicorn, he was able to forge rings rude in shape, but strong. With these he fastened together the severed lengths of chains, and made long pieces.

To work at a forge without assistance is something more than troublesome: he succeeded, nevertheless. It is true that he had only to forge and shape articles of comparatively small size, which he was able to handle with the pliers in one hand, while he hammered with the other.

He cut into lengths the iron bars of the captain's bridge, on which Clubin used to pass to and fro from paddle-box to paddle-box giving his orders; forged at one extremity of each piece a point, and at the other a flat head. By this means he manufactured large nails of about a foot in length. These nails, much used in pontoon making, are useful in fixing anything in rocks.

What was his object in all these labors? We shall see.

He was several times compelled to renew the blade of his hatchet and the teeth of his saw. For re-notching the saw he had manufactured a three-sided file.

Occasionally he made use of the capstan of the Durande. The hook of the chain broke: he made another.

By the aid of his pliers and pincers, and by using his chisel as a screw-driver, he set to work to remove the two paddle-wheels of the vessel, — an object which he accomplished. This was rendered practicable by reason of a peculiarity in their construction. The paddle-boxes which covered them served him to stow them away. With the planks of these paddle-boxes he made two cases in which he deposited the two paddles, piece by piece, each part being carefully numbered.

His lump of chalk became precious for this purpose.

He kept the two cases upon the strongest part of the wreck.

When these preliminaries were completed, he found himself face to face with the great difficulty. The problem of the engine of the Durande was now clearly before him.

Taking the paddle-wheels to pieces had proved practicable. It was very different with the machinery.

In the first place, he was almost entirely ignorant of the details of the mechanism. Working thus blindly he might do some irreparable damage. Then, even in attempting to dismember it, if he had ventured on that course, far other tools would be necessary than such as he could fabricate with a cavern for a forge, a wind-draught for bellows, and a stone for an anvil. In attempting therefore to take to

pieces the machinery there was the risk of destroying it.

The attempt seemed at first sight wholly impracticable.

The apparent impossibility of the project rose before him like a stone wall, blocking further progress.

What was to be done?

CHAPTER II.

PREPARATIONS.

GILLIATT had an idea.

Since the time of the carpenter-mason of Salbris, who in the sixteenth century, in the dark ages of science, — long before Amontons had discovered the first law of electricity, or Lahire the second, or Coulomb the third, — without other helper than a child, his son, with ill-fashioned tools, in the chamber of the great clock of La Charité-sur-Loire, resolved at one stroke five or six problems in statics and dynamics inextricably intervolved like the wheels in a block of carts and wagons; since the time of that grand and marvellous achievement of the poor workman who found means, without breaking a single piece of wire, without throwing one of the teeth of the wheels out of gear, to lower in one piece, by a marvellous simplification, from the second story of the clock-tower to the first, that massive monitor of the hours, made all of iron and brass, "large as the room in which the man watches at night from the tower," with its motion, its cylinders, its barrels, its drum, its hooks, and its weights, the barrel of its spring steel-yard, its horizontal pendulum, the holdfasts of its escapement, its reels of large and small

chains, its stone weights, one of which weighed five hundred pounds, its bells, its peals, its jacks that strike the hours, — since the days, I say, of the man who accomplished this miracle, and of whom posterity knows not even the name, nothing that could be compared with the project which Gilliatt was meditating had ever been attempted. The task of whose accomplishment he dreamed was still more formidable, — that is to say, a far more delicate one.

The ponderousness, the delicacy, the involvement of the difficulties, were not less in the machinery of the Durande than in the clock of La Charité-sur-Loire.

The untaught mechanic had his helpmate, — his son; Gilliatt was alone.

A crowd gathered together from Meung-sur-Loire, from Nevers, and even from Orleans, able at time of need to assist the mason of Salbris, and to encourage him with their friendly voices. Gilliatt had around him no voices but those of the wind, no crowd but the assemblage of waves.

There is nothing more remarkable than the timidity of ignorance, unless it be its temerity. When ignorance becomes daring, she has sometimes a sort of compass within herself, — the intuition of the truth, clearer oftentimes in a simple mind than in a learned brain.

Ignorance invites to an attempt. It is a state of wonderment, which, with its concomitant curiosity, forms a power. Knowledge often enough disconcerts and makes overcautious. Gama, had he known

what lay before him, would have recoiled before the Cape of Storms. If Columbus had been a great geographer, he might have failed to discover America.

The second successful climber of Mont Blanc was the savant Saussure; the first, the goat-herd Balmat.

These instances, I admit, are exceptions, which detract nothing from science, which remains the rule. The ignorant man may discover; it is the learned who invent.

The sloop was still at anchor in the creek of The Man rock, where the sea left it in peace. Gilliatt, as will be remembered, had arranged everything for maintaining constant communication with it. He visited the sloop and measured her beam carefully in several parts, but particularly her midship frame. Then he returned to the Durande and measured the diameter of the floor of the engine-room. This diameter, of course without the paddles, was two feet less than the broadest part of the deck of his boat. The machinery, therefore, might be put aboard the sloop.

But how could it be got there?

CHAPTER III.

GILLIATT'S MASTERPIECE COMES TO THE RESCUE OF LETHIERRY'S.

ANY fisherman who had been mad enough to loiter in the neighborhood of Gilliatt's labors at this time would have been repaid for his hardihood by a singular sight between the two Douvres.

Before his eyes would have appeared four stout beams, at equal distances, stretching from one Douvre to the other, and apparently forced into the rock, which is the firmest of all holds. On the Little Douvre, their extremities were laid and buttressed upon the projections of rock; on the Great Douvre, they had to be driven in by blows of a hammer, by the powerful hand of a workman standing upright upon the beam itself. These supports were a little longer than the distance between the rocks. Hence the firmness of their hold, and hence also their slanting position. They touched the Great Douvre at an acute, and the Little Douvre at an obtuse angle. Their inclination was only slight; but it was unequal, which was a defect. But for this defect they might have been supposed to be prepared to receive the planking of a deck. To these four beams were attached four sets of hoisting apparatus, each having

its pendant and its tackle-fall, with the bold peculiarity of having the tackle-blocks with two sheaves at one extremity of the beam and the simple pulleys at the opposite end. This distance, which was too great not to be perilous, was necessitated by the operations to be effected. The blocks were firm and the pulleys strong. To this tackle-gear cables were attached, which from a distance looked like threads; while beneath this apparatus of tackle and carpentry, in the air, the massive hull of the Durande seemed suspended by threads.

She was not yet suspended, however. Under the cross-beams eight perpendicular holes had been made in the deck, — four on the port, and four on the starboard side of the engine; eight other holes had been made beneath them through the keel. The cables, descending vertically from the four tackle-blocks through the deck, passed out at the keel and under the machinery, re-entered the ship by the holes on the other side, and passing again upward through the deck, returned and were wound round the beams. Here a sort of jigger-tackle held them in a bunch bound fast to a single cable, capable of being directed by one arm. The single cable passed over a hook and through a dead-eye, which completed the apparatus, and kept it in check. This combination compelled the four tacklings to work together, and acting as a complete restraint upon the suspending powers, became a sort of dynamical rudder in the hand of the pilot of the operation, maintaining the movements in equilibrium. The ingenious adjustment of this system

of tackling had some of the simplifying qualities of the Weston pulley of these times, with a mixture of the antique polyspast of Vitruvius. Gilliatt had discovered this, although he knew nothing of the dead Vitruvius or of the still unborn Weston. The length of the cables varied, according to the unequal declivity of the cross-beams, and corrected somewhat this inequality. The ropes were dangerous, for the untarred hemp was liable to give way. Chains would have been better in this respect; but chains would not have passed well through the tackle-blocks.

The apparatus was full of defects; but as the work of one man it was surprising. For the rest, it will be understood that many details are omitted which would render the construction perhaps intelligible to practical mechanics, but obscure to others.

The top of the funnel passed between the two beams in the middle.

Gilliatt, unconscious plagiarist of an invention that was unknown to him, had reconstructed three centuries later, without suspecting it, the mechanism of the Salbris carpenter, — a mechanism rude and incorrect, and hazardous for him who would dare to use it.

Here let us remark that the rudest defects do not prevent a mechanism from working well or ill. It may limp, but it moves. The obelisk in the square of St. Peter's at Rome is erected in a way which offends against all the principles of statics. The carriage of the Czar Peter was so constructed that it

appeared about to overturn at every step; but it travelled onward for all that. What deformities are there in the machinery of Marly! Everything that is heterodox in hydraulics. Yet it did not the less supply Louis XIV. with water.

Come what might, Gilliatt had faith. He had even anticipated success so confidently as to fix in the bulwarks of the sloop, on the day when he measured its proportions, two pairs of corresponding iron rings on each side, exactly at the same distances as the four rings on board the Durande, to which were attached the four chains of the funnel.

Evidently he had in his mind a very complete and settled plan. All the chances being against him, he had evidently determined that all the precautions at least should be on his side.

He did some things which seemed useless; a sign of attentive premeditation.

His manner of proceeding would, as we have said, have puzzled an observer, even though familiar with mechanical operations.

A witness of his labor who had seen him, for example, with enormous efforts, and at the risk of breaking his neck, driving with blows of his hammer eight or ten great nails which he had forged, into the base of the two Douvres at the entrance of the defile between them, would have had some difficulty in understanding the objects of these nails, and would probably have wondered what could be the use of all that trouble.

If he had then seen him measuring the portion of the fore bulwark which had remained, as we have

described it, hanging on by the wreck, then attaching a strong cable to the upper edge of that portion, cutting away with strokes of his hatchet the dislocated fastenings which held it, then dragging it out of the defile, pushing the lower part by the aid of the receding tide, while he dragged the upper part; finally, by great labor fastening with the cable this heavy mass of planks and piles wider than the entrance of the defile itself with the nails driven into the base of the Little Douvre, the observer would perhaps have found it still more difficult to comprehend, and might have wondered why Gilliatt, if he wanted for the purpose of his operations to disencumber the space between the two rocks of this mass, had not allowed it to fall into the sea, where the tide would have carried it away.

Gilliatt had probably his reasons.

In fixing the nails in the basement of the rocks, he had taken advantage of all the cracks in the granite, enlarged them where needful, and driven in first of all wedges of wood, in which he fixed the nails. He made a rough commencement of similar preparations in the two rocks which rose at the other extremity of the narrow passage on the eastern side. He furnished with plugs of wood all the crevices, as if he desired to keep these also ready to hold nails or clamps; but this appeared to be a simple precaution, for he did not use them further. His penury naturally rendered him prudent, and he was compelled to economize, and only to use his materials as he had need, and at the moment when the necessity for them

came. This was another addition to his numerous difficulties.

As fast as one labor was accomplished another became necessary. Gilliatt passed without hesitation from task to task, and resolutely accomplished his giant strides.

CHAPTER IV.

SUB RE.

THE aspect of the man who accomplished all these labors became terrible.

Gilliatt in his multifarious tasks expended all his strength at once, and regained it with difficulty.

Privations on the one hand, lassitude on the other, had much reduced him. His hair and beard had grown long. He had but one shirt which was not in rags. He went about barefooted, the wind having carried away one of his shoes and the sea the other. Fragments of the rude and dangerous stone anvil which he used had left small wounds upon his hands and arms, the marks of labor. These wounds, or rather scratches, were superficial; but the keen air and the salt sea irritated them continually.

He was generally hungry, thirsty, and cold.

His store of fresh water was gone; his rye-meal was used or eaten. He had nothing left but a little biscuit.

This he broke with his teeth, having no water in which to soak it.

By little and little, and day by day, his powers decreased.

The terrible rocks were consuming his life.

How to obtain food was a problem; how to get drink was a problem; how to find rest was a problem.

He ate when he was fortunate enough to find a crayfish or a crab; he drank when he chanced to see a sea-bird descend upon a point of rock, for on climbing up to the spot he generally found there a hollow with a little fresh water. He drank from it after the bird, sometimes with the bird; for the gulls and sea-mews had become accustomed to him, and no longer flew away at his approach. Even in his greatest need of food he did not attempt to molest them. He had, as will be remembered, a superstition about birds. The birds on their part, now that his hair was rough and wild and his beard long, had no fear of him. The change in his face gave them confidence; he had lost resemblance to men, he resembled rather a wild beast.

The birds and Gilliatt, in fact, had become good friends. Companions in poverty, they helped each other. As long as he had any meal, he had crumbled for them some little bits of the cakes he made. In his deeper distress they showed him in their turn the places where he might find the little pools of water.

He ate the shell-fish raw. Shell-fish help in a certain degree to quench the thirst. The crabs he cooked. Having no kettle, he roasted them between two stones made red-hot in his fire, after the manner of the savages of the Faroe Islands.

Meanwhile signs of the equinoctial season had begun to appear. There came rain, — an angry rain. No showers or steady torrents, but fine, sharp, icy,

penetrating points which pierced to his skin through his clothing, and to his bones through his skin. It was a rain which yielded little water for drinking, but which drenched him none the less.

Chary of assistance, prodigal of misery, — such was the character of these rains. During one week Gilliatt suffered from them all day and all night.

At night, in his rocky recess, nothing but the overpowering fatigue of his daily work enabled him to get sleep. The great sea-gnats stung him, and he awakened covered with blisters.

He had a kind of low fever, which sustained him; this fever is a succor which destroys. By instinct he chewed the mosses, or sucked the leaves of wild cochlearia, scanty tufts of which grew in the dry crevices of the rocks. Of his suffering, however, he took little heed. He had no time to spare from his work for the consideration of his own privations. The rescue of the machinery of the Durande was progressing well. That sufficed for him.

Every now and then, as his work required, he jumped into the water, swam to some point, and gained a footing again. He simply plunged into the sea and left it, as a man passes from one room in his dwelling to another.

His clothing was never dry. It was saturated with rain-water, which had no time to evaporate, and with sea-water, which never dries. He lived perpetually wet.

Living in wet clothing is a habit which may be acquired. The poor groups of Irish people, old men, mothers, girls almost naked, and infants, who pass the

winter in the open air, under the snow and rain, huddled together, sometimes at the corners of houses, in the streets of London, live and die in this condition.

To be soaked with wet, and yet to be thirsty: Gilliatt grew familiar with this strange torture. There were times when he was glad to suck the sleeve of his loose coat.

The fire which he made scarcely warmed him. A fire in open air yields little comfort. It burns one side while the other freezes.

Gilliatt often shivered even while sweating over his forge.

Everywhere about him rose resistance amid a terrible silence. He felt himself the enemy of an unseen combination. There is a dismal *non possumus* in nature. The inertia of matter is like a sullen threat. A mysterious persecution environed him. He suffered from heats and shiverings. The fire ate into his flesh; the water froze him; feverish thirst tormented him; the wind tore his clothing; hunger undermined the organs of the body. The oppression of all these things was constantly exhausting him. Obstacles silent, immense, seemed to converge from all points, with the blind irresponsibility of fate, yet full of a savage unanimity. He felt them pressing inexorably upon him. No means were there of escaping from them. His sufferings produced the impression of some living persecutor. He had a constant sense of something working against him, of a hostile form ever present, ever laboring to circumvent and to subdue him. He could have fled from the struggle; but since he remained, he had no choice but to war

with this impenetrable hostility. He asked himself what it was. It took hold of him, grasped him tightly, overpowered him, deprived him of breath. The invisible persecutor was destroying him by slow degrees. Every day the oppression became greater, as if a mysterious screw had received another turn.

His situation in this dreadful spot resembled a duel, in which a suspicion of some treachery haunts the mind of one of the combatants.

Now it seemed a coalition of obscure forces which surrounded him. He felt that there was somewhere a determination to be rid of his presence. It is thus that the glacier chases the loitering ice-block.

Almost without seeming to touch him this latent coalition had reduced him to rags; had left him bleeding, distressed, and as it were disabled even before the battle. He labored indeed, not the less, — without pause or rest; but as the work advanced, the workman himself lost ground. It might have been fancied that Nature, dreading his bold spirit, adopted the plan of slowly undermining his bodily power. Gilliatt kept his ground, and left the rest to the future. The sea had begun by consuming him; what would come next?

The double Douvres — that dragon made of granite, and lying in ambush in mid-ocean — had sheltered him. It had allowed him to enter, and to do his will; but its hospitality resembled the welcome of devouring jaws.

The desert, the boundless surface, the unfathomable space around him and above, so full of negatives to man's will; the mute, inexorable determination of

phenomena following their appointed course; the grand general law of things, implacable and passive; the ebbs and flows; the rocks themselves, dark Pleiades each of whose points was a star amid vortices, a centre of an irradiation of currents; the strange, indefinable conspiracy to stifle with indifference the temerity of a living being; the wintry winds, the clouds, and the beleaguering waves enveloped him, closed round him slowly, and in a measure shut him in, and separated him from companionship, like a dungeon built up by degrees round a living man. All was against him, nothing for him; he felt himself isolated, abandoned, enfeebled, sapped, forgotten. His storehouse was empty, his tools were broken or defective; he was tormented with hunger and thirst by day, with cold by night. His sufferings had left him with wounds and tatters, rags covering sores, torn hands, bleeding feet, wasted limbs, pallid cheeks, and eyes bright with a strange light; but this was the steady flame of his determination.

The human eye is so constructed that it can express force of character. A single glance of the eye reveals the quantity of manhood we possess. We assert ourselves through the intelligence that sparkles beneath the eyebrows. Little consciences pass through life with half-closed eyelids, great ones radiate light. If there is no fire in the eye, there is no thought in the brain, no love in the heart. Love wills, and sudden flashes of the will illumine. Resolution kindles the eye with new fire, and this glorious fire is the combustion of timorous thoughts.

Inflexibility is sublime. Bravery may be filled with

fitfulness, valor may be a matter of temperament, courage is but one of many virtues, but persistency in the True is sublime. Part of the secret, the whole secret perhaps of all great natures lies concealed in that word *Perseverando*. Perseverance is to courage what the wheel is to the lever, — a perpetual repair of its support.

Whether the end be an earthly or a heavenly one, all depends upon persisting unto the attainment of that end. The first instance gives us Columbus, the second Jesus. There is madness in treading the road that leads to the Cross, but it is a glorious madness. He who will not permit his conscience to be baffled or his will disarmed must inevitably suffer and triumph. In the moral world fore-knowledge of failure renders a plan of action none the less needful, and from the fall springs the ascension. Mediocre natures permit themselves to be dissuaded by plausible obstacles; but strong natures cannot be dissuaded. They anticipate overthrow and ruin, but they are sure of victory. You may give Étienne innumerable excellent reasons why he should not compel men to stone him; but it is the disdain of reasonable objections that gives birth to that sublime victory of the vanquished, that victory we call martyrdom.

All Gilliatt's efforts seemed to tend to the impossible. His success was trifling and slow. He was compelled to expend much labor for very little results. This it was that gave to his struggle its noble and pathetic character.

That it should have required so many preparations, so much toil, so many cautious experiments, such

nights of hardship, and such days of danger, merely to set up four beams over a shipwrecked vessel, to divide and isolate the portion that could be saved, and to adjust to that wreck within a wreck four tackle-blocks with their cables, — the unfortunate sole result of his solitary labor. Fatality mingles with the cause, necessity with the result.

That solitary position Gilliatt had more than accepted; he had deliberately chosen it. Dreading a competitor, because a competitor might have proved a rival, he had sought for no assistance. The overwhelming enterprise, the risk, the danger, the toil multiplied by itself, the possible destruction of the salvor in his work, famine, fever, nakedness, distress, — he had chosen all these for himself! Such was his selfishness. He was like a man placed in some terrible chamber which is being slowly exhausted of air. His vitality was leaving him by little and little. He scarcely perceived it.

Exhaustion of the bodily strength does not necessarily exhaust the will. Faith is only a secondary power; the will is the first. The mountains, which faith is proverbially said to move, are nothing beside that which the will can accomplish. All that Gilliatt lost in vigor he gained in tenacity. The destruction of the physical man under the oppressive influence of that wild surrounding sea and rock and sky seemed only to reinvigorate his moral nature.

Gilliatt felt no fatigue; or, rather, would not yield to any. The refusal of the mind to recognize the failings of the body is in itself an immense power.

He saw nothing except the steps in the progress

of his labors. He was not conscious of his own wretchedness.

His object — now seeming so near attainment — wrapped him in perpetual illusions.

He endured all this suffering without any other thought than is comprised in the word "Forward." His work flew to his head; the strength of the will is intoxicating. Its intoxication is called heroism.

He had become a kind of Job, having the ocean for the scene of his sufferings. But he was a Job wrestling with difficulty, a Job combating and making head against afflictions; a Job conquering; and if such names are not too great to be applied to a poor sailor and fisher of crabs and crayfish, a Promethean Job.

CHAPTER V.

SUB UMBRA.

SOMETIMES in the night-time Gilliatt woke and peered into the darkness.

He felt a strange emotion.

His eyes were opened upon the black night; the situation was dismal, full of disquietude.

There is such a thing as the pressure of darkness.

A strange roof of shadow; a deep obscurity which no diver can explore; a light mingled with that obscurity of a strange, subdued, and sombre kind; floating atoms of rays, like a dust of seeds or of ashes; millions of lamps, but no illumining; a vast sprinkling of fire, of which no man knows the secret; a diffusion of shining points, like a drift of sparks arrested in their course; the disorder of the whirlwind, with the fixedness of death; a mysterious and abysmal depth; an enigma, at once showing and concealing its face; the infinite in its mask of darkness, — these are the synonyms of night. Its weight lies heavily on the soul of man.

This union of all mysteries — the mystery of the Cosmos and the mystery of Fate — oppresses human reason.

The pressure of darkness acts in inverse proportion upon different kinds of natures. In the presence of

night man feels his own incompleteness; he perceives the dark void, and is sensible of infirmity. It is like the vacancy of blindness. Face to face with night, man bends, kneels, prostrates himself, crouches on the earth, crawls towards a cave, or seeks for wings. Almost always he shrinks from that vague presence of the Infinite Unknown. He asks himself what it is; he trembles and bows his head. Sometimes he desires to go to it.

To go whither?

He can only answer, "Yonder."

But what is that, and what is there?

This curiosity is evidently forbidden to the spirit of man; for all around him the roads which bridge that gulf are broken up or gone; no arch exists for him to span the Infinite. But there is attraction in forbidden knowledge, as in the edge of the abyss. Where the footstep cannot tread the eye may reach; where the eye can penetrate no farther, the mind may soar. There is no man, however feeble or insufficient his resources, who does not essay. According to his nature he questions or recoils before that mystery. With some it has the effect of repressing; with others it enlarges the soul. The spectacle is sombre, indefinite.

Is the night calm and cloudless? Still its deeps are impenetrable. Is it stormy? It is then a sea of cloud. Its limitless deeps reveal themselves to us, and yet baffle our gaze; close themselves against research, but open to conjecture. Its innumerable dots of light only make deeper the obscurity beyond. Jewels, scintillations, stars; existences revealed in

the unknown universes; dread defiances to man's approach; landmarks of the infinite creation; boundaries there, where there are no bounds; sea-marks impossible, and yet real, numbering the fathoms of those infinite deeps. One microscopic glittering point, then another, then another, imperceptible yet enormous. Yonder light is a focus; that focus is a star; that star is a sun; that sun is a universe; that universe is nothing. For all numbers are as zero in the presence of the Infinite.

These worlds, which yet are nothing, exist. Through this fact we feel the difference which separates nothingness from non-existence.

The sky is a presence inaccessible and inexplicable to man; hence from its contemplation springs a sublime phenomenon, — the enlargement of the soul in wonder.

Awe is a human attribute. The brute is not conscious of this dread; but in that majestic presence intelligence, however obscured by its dread, reads the proof-mark of its existence.

In this darkness we feel unity; hence our horror. At the same time we see in it a complexity that bewilders us. Its unity overwhelms, deprives us of desire to resist. Its complexity causes us to look about us on every side, to fear the unexpected, to be watchful and prepared. Standing in the presence of the One, we submit; while to the Many we offer defiance. For this unity of darkness resolves itself into multiplicity, — a mysterious multiplicity, visible in matter and perceptible in thought; and it is silent fact that makes watchfulness more needful.

The writer of these lines has said elsewhere that night is the proper and normal condition of the special creation that embraces ourselves; while day, brief in duration as in space, hardly affects us more than the proximity of a star.

The universe does not work its nightly miracle without friction; and the friction of its machinery leaves contusions in life itself. It is to this friction that we give the name of Evil. We feel in that obscurity an evil itself,—an inherent contradiction of the divine order of things; the implicit blasphemy of the Fact, standing in open rebellion towards the Idea. Evil, like some hydra-head teratology, penetrates every portion of the vast Cosmos,—utters everywhere its protest. It utters it in the hurricane, and harasses the course of a ship; it utters its protest in chaos, and impedes the birth of a world. There is unanimity in goodness; but evil is ubiquitous, and deranges the logicalness of life. It commands that the bird devour the fly, the comet the planet. The existence of evil is the stigma set upon creation.

The obscurity of night makes the brain swim. Who seeks to penetrate it is overwhelmed by it, must contend with it; and nothing can fatigue more than such a contest with shadows. It is an attempt to study the meaning of that which has been effaced.

There is no definite resting-place for the mind; the starting-point never leads to a conclusion.

Contradictory solutions hopelessly interwoven, labyrinths of doubt through which the mind must forever wander, the endless subdivision of phenomena

forever exfoliated beneath the definite blow of an invisible hand, a seeming confusion of laws in fathomless promiscuousness, so that the mineral appears to vegetate, and vegetation seems a vital process, and thought gravitates, and love radiates light, and gravitation becomes an impulse that loves, — these are the phenomena of darkness; and that vast Face, portentous with endless questions born of obscurity, — the face whose outline dimly seen suggests the outline of the Unknown, this colossal apparition of the simultaneous forces of Nature, — an apparition that through the vastness and indistinctness of space is seen not of the eye alone, but by the intelligence as well, — this vision of things invisible is the Shadow's self infolding the spirit of man.

He may not know its details, but there lies heavy upon him the monstrous burden of the whole; he bears of this as much as his soul apprehends. It was the sense of such a weight that made of the Chaldean shepherd an astronomer. Involuntary revelations transpire through the pores of creation. Thus Science exudes, so to speak, her very life. She takes possession of the ignorant, and every recluse receiving this mysterious impregnation becomes, often unconsciously, a natural philosopher.

The obscurity is indivisible, and inhabited by the Absolute. Within its depths there is displacement without displacement, — movement that fills us with alarm. Within the darkness the sacred mystery of creation fulfils itself in all its phases. Premeditated existences, forces, appointed destinies, — all lend themselves to the endless and exuberant work. An

awful existence peoples the darkness. The vast evolutions of heavenly bodies, the stellar family, the planetary family, zodiacal flower-dust, the *Quid divinum* of the currents, of effluvia, of polarizations and attractions; embraces followed by antagonisms,—the magnificent ebb and flow of the universal antithesis; at the centres imponderability and freedom; life within the globes, and light and intelligence infolding them; the wandering atom, the seed disseminated, arrested fecundations, impregnations, hostile encounters, marvellous profusion, unimaginable distances, fluids circulating in dizzy mazes, strange phenomena intermingling and pursuing each other in the darkness,— all these form parts of the wonderful mechanism; these are the whispers of the flying spheres, turning upon invisible wheels; these are the works of darkness.

They afford the learned food for conjecture, while the ignorant can only assent and tremble; the mystery is there and manifests itself; but it is invincible, incomprehensible, and inaccessible. We know that it oppresses us, for we feel hanging over us a testimony black and intangible, and we are crushed beneath its impalpable weight.

Everywhere we are surrounded by the unfathomable; there is no part of it all intelligible to us.

And then in addition to all this will come that terrible question, Does this Immanence possess Being? The shadow infolds us; we look and listen.

Meanwhile the darkened world moves and turns, the flowers are aware of the nightly movement, the catch-fly opens at eleven o'clock at night, the day-lily at five in the morning, with startling regularity.

In other deeps the drop of water is peopled with living creatures. The *infusoria* multiplies enormously; infinitesmal existences display a grandeur of their own; the reverse side of infinitude is made manifest, and in an hour a single diatom produces three hundred millions of diatoms.

Who shall solve a problem that presents simultaneously such a multitude of enigmas?

We must resort to faith, but faith in itself will not bring tranquillity. Faith has some strange incomprehensible need of forms, and out of this need grow various systems of religion, for nothing can be more uninviting than undefined belief.

Whatever may be the thought or the intention of man, however great may be his opposition, when he surveys the darkness he does not survey merely, he contemplates.

What can be made of such phenomena? What explanation can deal with all these mysterious details and not seem chimerical?

What revelations would ensue, abstruse, endless in number, obscure, simultaneous, and uncertain as children's stammerings! The revelation is never made; the shadow is silent, but that silence is audible.

One solution disengages itself majestically from this mystery,— the Idea of God. That idea is ineradicable: it is a vital part of man's nature. Syllogisms, discussions, negations, systems, religions, — all these may affect it, but they cannot lessen the power of that Idea. The darkness speaks in affirmation, but the indwelling existence, what of it? We are beset with doubt. That all these forces act unitedly in

some inexplicable way is proved by the fact that all this obscure world remains in equilibrium. The universe suspended in space does not fall, the incessant displacement of atoms is effected without break or accident. Man himself participates in this movement, and to his oscillations we give the name of Destiny. Where does Destiny begin and Nature end? What difference may there be between an event and a season, a grief and a shower, a virtue and a star; what distinction between an hour and a wave?

The vast moving machinery continues to revolve tranquilly, and does not answer. The starry sky is a vision of wheels, balances, and counterbalances. The union of Supreme Contemplation and Supreme Cogitation speaks through it all. The Real and the Abstract are both visible in their entirety. We cannot penetrate beyond this obscurity, we are within its power, at the mercy of the darkness, without possible escape. We see that we are within the mechanism, we form an integral part of the whole, a unity that is incomprehensible to us. We feel that the mystery within us fraternizes with the mystery outside ourselves. That double mystery is the sublime harbinger of Death. What agony, and at the same time what rapture! To be united with the Infinite, to be led, through this union, to attribute unto ourselves a necessary immortality and — who knows? — a possible eternity, to feel emerging from the vast deluge of universal life the unconquerable persistence of the Me, to gaze at the stars and say to each, "I too am a spirit as thou!" to gaze into obscurity and

say, "I too am an abyss!"— these are the thoughts born of the Night.

All these vague imaginings, increased and intensified by solitude, weighed upon Gilliatt.

He understood them little, but he felt them. His was a powerful intellect clouded; a great spirit wild and untaught.

CHAPTER VI.

GILLIATT PLACES THE SLOOP IN READINESS.

This rescue of the machinery of the wreck as meditated by Gilliatt was, as we have already said, like an escape from prison, and every such escape requires patience and industry, — industry carried to the point of a miracle, patience only to be compared with a long agony. A certain prisoner named Thomas, at the Mont St. Michel, found means of secreting the greater part of a wall in his mattress. Another at Tulle, in 1820, cut away a quantity of lead from the terrace where the prisoners walked for exercise. With what kind of knife? No one could guess. And melted this lead with what fire? None have ever discovered; but it is known that he cast it in a mould made of a crumb of bread. With this lead and this mould he made a key, and with this key succeeded in opening a lock of which he had never seen anything but the keyhole. Some of this marvellous ingenuity Gilliatt possessed. He had once climbed and descended from the cliff at Boisrosé. He was the Baron Trenck of the wreck, and the Latude of her machinery.

The sea, like a jailer, kept watch over him.

For the rest, mischievous and inclement as the rain

had been, he had contrived to derive some benefit from it. He had in part replenished his stock of fresh water; but his thirst was inextinguishable, and he emptied his can as fast as he filled it.

One day — it was on the last day of April or the first of May, I believe — all was at length ready for his purpose.

The engine-room was as it were enclosed between the eight cables hanging from the tackle-blocks, four on one side, four on the other. He had cut around the sixteen holes upon the deck and under the keel through which the cables passed; the planking had been sawed, the timber cut with the hatchet, the iron-work with a file, the sheathing with the chisel. The part of the keel immediately under the machinery was cut squarewise, and ready to descend with it while still supporting it. All this frightful swinging mass was held only by one chain, which was itself only kept in position by a filed notch. At this stage, in such a labor and so near its completion, haste is prudence.

The water was low, the moment favorable.

Gilliatt had succeeded in removing the axle of the paddles, the extremities of which might have proved an obstacle and checked the descent. He had contrived to make this heavy portion fast in a vertical position within the engine-room itself.

It was time to bring this work to an end. The workman, as we have said, was not weary, for his will was strong; but his tools were exhausted. The forge was by degrees becoming impracticable: the blower had begun to work badly; the little hydraulic

fall being of sea-water, saline deposits had encrusted the joints of the apparatus, and prevented its free action.

Gilliatt visited the creek of The Man rock, examined the sloop, and assured himself that all was in good condition, particularly the four rings fixed to starboard and to larboard; then he weighed anchor, and worked the heavy barge-shaped craft with the oars till he brought it alongside the two Douvres. The defile between the rocks was wide enough to admit it; there was also depth enough. On the day of his arrival he had satisfied himself that it was possible to push the sloop under the Durande.

The feat, however, was difficult; it required the minute precision of a watchmaker. The operation was all the more delicate from the fact that for his object he was compelled to force it in by the stern, rudder first. It was necessary that the mast and the rigging of the sloop should project beyond the wreck in the direction of the sea.

These embarrassments rendered all Gilliatt's operations awkward. It was not like entering the creek of The Man, where it was a mere affair of the tiller; it was necessary here to push, drag, row, and take soundings all together. Gilliatt consumed but a quarter of an hour in these manœuvres; but he was successful.

In fifteen or twenty minutes the sloop was adjusted under the Durande. It was almost wedged in there. By means of his two anchors he moored the boat by head and stern. The stronger of the two was placed so as to be efficient against the strongest

wind that could be feared, that from the southwest. Then by the aid of a lever and the capstan he lowered into the sloop the two cases containing the pieces of the paddle-wheel, the slings of which were all ready. The two cases served as ballast.

Relieved of these encumbrances, he fastened to the hook of the chain of the capstan the sling of the regulating tackle-gear, intending to check the pulleys.

Owing to the peculiar objects of this labor, the defects of the old sloop became useful qualities. It had no deck; her burden therefore would have greater depth, and could rest upon the hold. Her mast was very far forward, — too far forward indeed for general purposes; her cargo therefore would have more room, and the mast standing thus beyond the mass of the wreck, there would be nothing to hinder its disembarkation. It was a mere shell; but nothing is more stable than a shell on the sea.

While engaged in these operations Gilliatt suddenly perceived that the sea was rising. He looked around to see from what quarter the wind was coming.

CHAPTER VII.

SUDDEN DANGER.

THE breeze was scarcely perceptible; but what there was came from the west, — a disagreeable habit of the winds during the equinoxes.

The rising sea varies much in its effects upon the Douvres rocks, depending upon the quarter of the wind.

According to the gale which drives them before it, the waves enter the rocky corridor either from the east or from the west. Entering from the east, the sea is comparatively gentle; coming from the west, it is always furious. The reason of this is that the wind from the east blowing from the land has not had time to gather force; while the westerly winds, coming from the Atlantic, blow unchecked from a vast ocean. Even a very slight breeze, if it comes from the west, is serious. It rolls the huge billows from the illimitable space and dashes the waves against the narrow defile in greater bulk than can find entrance there.

A sea which rolls into a gulf is always terrible. It is the same with a crowd of people: a multitude is a sort of fluid body. When the quantity which can enter is less than the quantity endeavoring to

force a way, there is a fatal crush among the crowd, a fierce convulsion on the water. As long as the west wind blows, however slight the breeze, the Douvres are twice a day subjected to that rude assault. The sea rises, the tide presses up, the rock resists, the narrow gullet gives little entrance, the waves, driven against it violently, rebound and roar, and a tremendous surf beats the two sides of the gorge. Thus the Douvres, during the slightest wind from the west, present the singular spectacle of a sea comparatively calm without, while within the rocks a storm is raging. This tumult of waters, altogether confined and circumscribed, has nothing of the character of a tempest. It is a mere local outbreak among the waves, but a terrible one. As regards the winds from the north and south, they strike the rocks crosswise, and cause little surf in the passage. The entrance by the east — a fact which must be borne in mind — was close to The Man rock. The dangerous opening to the west was at the opposite extremity, exactly between the two Douvres.

It was at this western entrance that Gilliatt found himself with the wrecked Durande, and the sloop made fast beneath it.

A catastrophe seemed inevitable. There was not much wind, but it was sufficient for the impending mischief.

Before many hours the swell of the rising tide would be rushing with full force into the gorge of the Douvres. The first waves were already breaking. This swell and eddy of the entire Atlantic would have behind it the immense sea. There would be

no squall, no violence, but a simple overwhelming wave, which, beginning on the coasts of America, rolls towards the shores of Europe with an impetus gathered over four thousand miles. This wave, a gigantic ocean barrier, meeting the gap of the rocks, must be caught between the two Douvres, standing like watch-towers at the entrance, or like pillars of the defile. Thus swelled by the tide, augmented by resistance, driven back by the shoals, and urged on by the wind, it would strike the rock with violence, and with all the contortions from the obstacles it had encountered, and all the frenzy of a sea confined in limits, would rush between the rocky walls, where it would reach the sloop and the Durande, and destroy them.

A shield against this possible danger was wanting. Gilliatt had one.

The problem was to prevent the sea reaching it at one bound; to obstruct it from striking, while allowing it to rise; to bar the passage without refusing it admission; to prevent the compression of the water in the gorge, which was the whole danger; to turn an eruption into a simple flood; to extract as it were from the waves all their violence, and constrain the furies to be gentle; it was, in fact, to substitute an obstacle which will appease, for an obstacle which irritates.

Gilliatt, with that dexterity so much more efficient than mere force, sprang upon the rocks like a chamois among the mountains or a monkey in the forest; using for his tottering and dizzy strides the smallest projecting stone; leaping into the water, and issuing

from it again, swimming among the shoals and clambering the rocks, with a rope between his teeth and a mallet in his hand. Thus he detached the cable which kept suspended and also fast to the base of the Little Douvre the end of the forward side of the Durande; fashioned out of some ends of hawsers a sort of hinges, holding this bulwark to the huge nails fixed in the granite; swung this apparatus of planks upon them, like the gates of a great dock, and turned their sides, as he would turn a rudder, outward to the waves, which pushed the extremities upon the Great Douvre, while the rope hinges detained the other extremities upon the Little Douvre; next he contrived, by means of the huge nails placed beforehand for the purpose, to fix the same kind of fastenings upon the Great Douvre as on the little one; made completely fast the vast mass of woodwork against the two pillars of the gorge, slung a chain across this barrier like a baldric upon a cuirass; and in less than an hour this barricade against the sea was complete, and the gullet of the rocks closed as by a folding-door.

This powerful apparatus, a heavy mass of beams and planks, which laid flat would have made a raft, and upright formed a wall, had by the aid of the water been handled by Gilliatt with the adroitness of a juggler. It might almost have been said that the obstruction was complete before the rising sea had the time to perceive it.

It was one of those occasions on which Jean Bart would have employed the famous expression which he applied to the sea every time he narrowly escaped

shipwreck. "We have cheated the Englishman;" for it is well known that when that famous admiral meant to insult the ocean he called it "the Englishman."

The entrance to the defile being thus protected, Gilliatt thought of the sloop. He loosened sufficient cable for the two anchors to allow her to rise with the tide; an operation similar to what the mariners of old called "mouiller avec des embossures." In all this Gilliatt was not taken the least by surprise; the necessity had been foreseen. A seaman would have perceived it by the two pulleys of the top-ropes cut in the form of snatch-blocks, and fixed behind the sloop, through which passed two ropes, the ends of which were slung through the rings of the anchors.

Meanwhile the tide was rising fast; the half flood had arrived, a moment when the shock of the waves, even in comparatively moderate weather, may become considerable. Exactly what Gilliatt expected came to pass. The waves rolled violently against the barrier, struck it, broke heavily, and passed beneath. Outside was the heavy swell; within, the waters ran quietly. He had devised a sort of marine *furculæ caudinæ*. The sea was conquered.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOVEMENT RATHER THAN PROGRESS.

THE moment so long dreaded had come.

The problem now was to place the machinery in the boat.

Gilliatt remained thoughtful for some moments, holding the elbow of his left arm in his right hand, and applying his left hand to his forehead.

Then he climbed upon the wreck, one part of which, containing the engine, was to be parted from it, while the other was to remain.

He severed the four slings which fixed the four chains from the funnel on the port and the starboard sides. The slings being only of cord, his knife served him well enough for this purpose.

The four chains, set free, hung down along the sides of the funnel.

From the wreck he climbed up to the apparatus which he had constructed, stamped with his feet upon the beams, inspected the tackle-blocks, looked to the pulleys, handled the cables, examined the eking-pieces, assured himself that the untarred hemp was not saturated through, found that nothing was wanting and nothing giving way; then springing

from the height of the suspending props on to the deck, he took up his position near the capstan, in the part of the Durande which he intended to leave jammed in between the two Douvres. This was to be his post during his labors.

Earnest, but troubled with no impulses but what were useful to his work, he took a final glance at the hoisting-tackle, then seized a file and began to saw with it through the chain which held the whole suspended.

The rasping of the file was audible amid the roaring of the sea.

The chain from the capstan attached to the regulating gear was within his reach, — quite near his hand.

Suddenly there was a crash: the link which he was filing snapped when only half cut through; the whole apparatus swung violently. He had only just time to seize the regulating gear.

The severed chain beat against the rock; the eight cables strained; the huge mass, sawed and cut through, detached itself from the wreck; the belly of the hull opened, and the iron flooring of the engine-room was visible below the keel.

If he had not seized the regulating tackle at that instant it would have fallen; but his powerful hand was there, and it descended steadily.

When the brother of Jean Bart, Peter Bart, — that powerful and sagacious toper, that poor Dunkirk fisherman, who used to talk familiarly with the Grand Admiral of France, — went to the rescue of the galley "Langeron," in distress in the Bay of Ambleteuse,

endeavoring to save the heavy floating mass in the midst of the breakers of that furious bay, he rolled up the mainsail, tied it with sea-reeds, and trusted to the ties to break away of themselves and give the sail to the wind at the right moment. Just so Gilliatt trusted to the breaking of the chain; and the same eccentric feat of daring was crowned with the same success.

The tackle, taken in hand by Gilliatt, held out and worked well. Its function, as will be remembered, was to moderate the powers of the apparatus, thus reduced from many to one by bringing them into united action. The gear had some similarity to a bridle of a bowline, except that instead of trimming a sail it served to balance a complicated mechanism.

Erect, and with his hand upon the capstan, Gilliatt, so to speak, was enabled to feel the pulse of the apparatus.

It was here that his inventive genius manifested itself.

A remarkable coincidence of forces was the result.

While the machinery of the Durande, detached in a mass, was lowering to the sloop, the sloop rose slowly to receive it. The wreck and the salvage vessel, assisting each other in opposite ways, saved half the labor of the operation.

The tide swelling quietly between the two Douvres raised the sloop and brought it nearer to the Durande. The sea was more than conquered; it was tamed and broken in; it became, in fact, part of the mechanism.

The rising waters lifted the vessel without any sort of shock, gently, and almost with precaution, as one would handle porcelain.

Gilliatt combined and proportioned the two labors, — that of the water and that of the apparatus; and standing steadfast at the capstan, like some terrible statue obeyed by all the movements around it at the same moment, regulated the slowness of the descent by the slow rise of the sea.

There was no shock given to the waters, no slip among the tackle. It was a strange collaboration of all the natural forces subdued. On one side gravitation lowering the huge bulk, on the other the sea raising the bark. The attraction of heavenly bodies which causes the tide, and the attractive force of the earth called weight, seemed to conspire together to aid his plans. There was no hesitation, no stoppage in their service; under the dominance of mind these passive forces become active auxiliaries. From minute to minute the work advanced; the interval between the wreck and the sloop diminished insensibly. The approach continued in silence, and as in a sort of terror of the man who stood there. The elements received orders and fulfilled them.

Nearly at the moment when the tide ceased to raise it the cable ceased to slide. Suddenly, but without commotion, the pulleys stopped. The vast machine had taken its place in the boat as if some hand had placed it there. It stood straight, upright, motionless, firm. The iron floor of the engine-room rested with its four corners evenly upon the hold.

The work was accomplished.

Gilliatt contemplated it, lost in thought.

He was not the spoiled child of success. He bent under the weight of his great joy. He felt his limbs, as it were, sinking; and contemplating his triumph, he who had never been shaken by danger began to tremble.

He gazed upon the sloop under the wreck, and at the machinery in the sloop. He seemed to feel it hard to believe it true. It might have been supposed that he had never looked forward to that which he had accomplished. A miracle had been wrought by his hands, and he contemplated it in bewilderment.

His reverie lasted but a short time.

Starting like one awakening from a deep sleep, he seized his saw, cut the eight cables, separated now from the sloop, thanks to the rising of the tide, by only about ten feet; sprang aboard, took a bunch of cord, made four slings, passed them through the rings prepared beforehand, and fixed on both sides aboard the sloop the four chains of the funnel which only an hour before had been still fastened to their places aboard the Durande.

The funnel being secured, he disengaged the upper part of the machinery. A square portion of the planking of the Durande was adhering to it; he struck off the nails and relieved the sloop of this encumbrance of planks and beams, which fell over on to the rocks, — a great assistance in lightening it.

For the rest, the sloop, as has been foreseen, behaved well under the burden of the machinery. It

had sunk in the water, but only to a good water-line. Although massive, the engine of the Durande was less heavy than the pile of stones and the cannon which he had once brought back from Herm in the sloop.

All then was ended; he had only to depart.

CHAPTER IX.

FAVORS BESTOWED ARE SUDDENLY WITHDRAWN.

ALL was not ended.

To reopen the gorge thus closed by the portion of the Durande's bulwarks, and at once to push out with the sloop beyond the rocks, — nothing could appear more clear and simple. On the ocean every minute is urgent. There was little wind; scarcely a wrinkle on the open sea. The afternoon was beautiful, and promised a fine night. The sea indeed was calm, but the ebb had begun. The moment was favorable for starting. There would be the ebb-tide for leaving the Douvres, and the flood would carry him into Guernsey. It would be possible to be at St. Sampson's at daybreak.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself. There was a flaw in his arrangements which had baffled all his foresight.

The machinery was freed, but the chimney was not.

The tide, by raising the sloop to the wreck suspended in the air, had diminished the dangers of the descent, and abridged the labor; but this diminution of the interval had left the top of the funnel entangled in the kind of gaping frame formed by the

open hull of the Durande. The funnel was held fast there as between four walls.

The services rendered by the sea had been accompanied by that unfortunate drawback. It seemed as if the waves, constrained to obey, had avenged themselves by a malicious trick.

It is true that what the flood-tide had done, the ebb would undo.

The funnel, which was rather more than eighteen feet in height, was buried more than eight feet in the wreck. The water-level would fall about twelve feet. Thus the funnel, descending with the falling tide, would have four feet of room to spare, and would clear itself easily.

But how much time would elapse before that release would be completed? Six hours.

In six hours it would be near midnight. What means would there be of attempting to start at such an hour? What channel could he find among all those breakers, so full of dangers even by day? How was he to risk his vessel in the depth of black night in that inextricable labyrinth, that ambuscade of shoals?

There was no help for it. He must wait for the morrow. These six hours lost, entailed a loss of twelve hours at least.

He could not even advance the labor by opening the mouth of the gorge. His breakwater was necessary against the next tide.

He was compelled to rest. Folding his arms was almost the only thing which he had not yet done since his arrival on the rocks.

This forced inaction irritated, almost vexed him with himself, as if it had been his fault. He thought, "What would Déruchette say of me if she saw me thus doing nothing?"

And yet this interval for regaining his strength was not unprofitable.

The sloop was now at his command; he determined to pass the night in it.

He mounted once more to fetch his sheepskin upon the Great Douvre; descended again, supped off a few limpets and *châtaignes de mer*, drank, being very thirsty, a few draughts of water from his can, which was nearly emptied, enveloped himself in the skin, the wool of which felt comforting, lay down like a watch-dog beside the engine, drew his red cap over his eyes, and slept.

His sleep was profound. It was such sleep as men enjoy who have completed a great labor.

CHAPTER X.

SEA-WARNINGS.

In the middle of the night he awoke suddenly, and with a jerk like the recoil of a spring.

He opened his eyes.

The Douvres, rising high over his head, were lighted up as by the white glow of burning embers. Over all the dark escarpment of the rock there was a light like the reflection of a fire.

Where could this fire come from?

It was from the water.

The aspect of the sea was extraordinary.

The water seemed afire. As far as the eye could reach, among the reefs and beyond them, the sea ran with flame. The flame was not red; it had nothing in common with the grand living fires of volcanic craters or of great furnaces. There was no sparkling, no glare, no purple edges, no noise. Long trails of a pale tint simulated upon the water the folds of a winding-sheet. A trembling glow was spread over the waves. It was the spectre of a great fire rather than the fire itself. It was in some degree like the glow of unearthly flames lighting the inside of a sepulchre, — a burning darkness.

The night itself, dim, vast, and wide-diffused, was the fuel of that cold flame. It was a strange illu-

mination issuing out of blindness. The shadows, even, formed part of that phantom fire.

The sailors of the Channel are familiar with those indescribable phosphorescences, full of warning for the navigator. They are nowhere more surprising than in the Great V, near Isigny.

Seen in this light, surrounding objects lose their reality. A spectral glimmer renders them, as it were, transparent. Rocks become no more than outlines. Cables of anchors look like iron bars heated to a white heat. The nets of the fishermen beneath the water seem webs of fire. The half of the oar above the waves is dark as ebony; the rest, in the sea, like silver. The drops from the blades uplifted from the water fall in starry showers upon the sea. Every boat leaves a furrow behind it like a comet's tail. The sailors, wet and luminous, seem like men in flames. If you plunge a hand into the water, you withdraw it clothed in flame. The flame is dead, and is not felt. Your arm becomes a firebrand. You see the forms of things in the sea roll beneath the waves as in liquid fire. The foam twinkles. The fish are tongues of fire, or fragments of the forked lightning, moving in the pale depths.

The reflection of this brightness had passed over the closed eyelids of Gilliatt in the sloop. It was this that had awakened him.

His awakening was opportune.

The ebb-tide had run out, and the waters were beginning to rise again. The funnel, which had become disengaged during his sleep, was about to enter again into the yawning hollow above it.

It was rising slowly.

A rise of another foot would have entangled it in the wreck again. A rise of one foot is equivalent to half an hour's tide. If he intended, therefore, to take advantage of that temporary deliverance once more within his reach, he had just half an hour before him.

He leaped to his feet.

Urgent as the situation was, he stood for a few moments meditative, contemplating the phosphorescence of the waves.

Gilliatt knew the sea in all its phases. Notwithstanding all her tricks, and often as he had suffered from her terrors, he had long been her companion. That mysterious entity which we call the ocean had nothing in its secret thoughts which he could not divine. Observation, meditation, and solitude had made him a weather prophet, or weather-wise.

Gilliatt hastened to the top-ropes, and paid out some cable; then, being no longer held fast by the anchors, he seized the boat-hook of the sloop, and pushed her towards the entrance to the gorge some fathoms from the Durande, and quite near to the breakwater. Here, as the Guernsey sailors say, it had *du rang.* In less than ten minutes the sloop was withdrawn from beneath the carcass of the wreck. There was no further danger of the funnel being caught in a trap. The tide might rise now.

And yet Gilliatt's manner was not that of one about to take his departure.

He stood considering the light upon the sea once

more; but his thoughts were not of starting. He was thinking of how to moor the sloop again, and how to moor it more firmly than ever, though near to the exit from the defile.

Up to this time he had only used the two anchors of the sloop, and had not yet employed the little anchor of the Durande, which he had found, as will be remembered, among the breakers. This anchor had been deposited by him, in readiness for any emergency, in a corner of the sloop, with a quantity of hawsers and blocks of top-ropes, and his cable, all furnished beforehand with large knots, which prevented its dragging. He now let go this third anchor, taking care to fasten the cable to a rope, one end of which was slung through the anchor-ring, while the other was attached to the windlass of the sloop. In this manner he made a kind of triangular triple anchorage, much stronger than the moorings with two anchors. All this indicated keen anxiety, and a redoubling of precautions. A sailor would have seen in this operation something similar to an anchorage in bad weather, when there is fear of a current which might carry the vessel under the wind.

The phosphorescence which he had been observing, and upon which his eye was now fixed once more, was threatening, but serviceable at the same time. But for it he would have been held fast locked in sleep, and deceived by the night. The strange appearance upon the sea had awakened him, and made things about him visible.

The light which it shed among the rocks was, in-

deed, ominous; but disquieting as it appeared to be to Gilliatt, it had served to show him the dangers of his position, and had rendered possible his operations in extricating the sloop. Henceforth, whenever he should be able to set sail, the vessel, with its freight of machinery, would be free.

And yet the idea of departing was farther than ever from his mind. The sloop being fixed in its new position, he went in quest of the strongest chain which he had in his store-cavern, and attaching it to the nails driven into the two Douvres, he fortified from within with this chain the rampart of planks and beams, already protected from without by the cross chain. Far from opening the entrance to the defile, he made the barrier more complete.

The phosphorescence lighted him still, but it was diminishing. The day, however, was beginning to break.

Suddenly he paused to listen.

CHAPTER XI.

A WORD TO THE WISE.

A FEEBLE, indistinct sound seemed to reach his ear from somewhere in the far distance.

At certain hours the great deeps rumble.

He listened a second time. The distant noise recommenced. Gilliatt shook his head like one who recognizes at last something familiar to him.

A few minutes later he was at the other extremity of the alley between the rocks, at the entrance facing the east, which had remained open until then, and by heavy blows of his hammer was driving large nails into the sides of the gullet near The Man rock, as he had done at the gullet of the Douvres.

The crevices of these rocks were prepared and well-furnished with timber, almost all of which was heart of oak. The rock on this side being much broken up, there were abundant cracks, and he was able to fix even more nails there than in the base of the two Douvres.

Suddenly, and as if some great breath had passed over it, the luminous appearance on the waters vanished. The twilight, becoming paler every moment, assumed its functions.

The nails being driven, Gilliatt dragged beams and cords, and then chains to the spot; and without

taking his eyes off his work, or permitting his mind to be diverted for a moment, he began to construct across the gorge of The Man, with beams fixed horizontally, and made fast by cables, one of those open barriers which science has now adopted under the name of breakwaters.

Those who have witnessed, for example, at La Rocquaine in Guernsey, or at Bourg-d'Eau in France, the effect produced by a few posts fixed in the rock, will understand the power of these simple preparations. This sort of breakwater is a combination of what is called in France *épi* with what is known in England as "a dam." The breakwater is the *chevaux-de-frise* of fortifications against tempests. Man can only struggle against the sea by taking advantage of this principle of dividing its forces.

Meanwhile, the sun had risen, and was shining brightly. The sky was clear, the sea calm.

Gilliatt pressed on his work. He, too, was calm; but there was anxiety in his haste. He passed with long strides from rock to rock, and returned dragging wildly sometimes a rider, sometimes a binding strake. The utility of all this preparation of timbers now became manifest. It was evident that he was about to confront a danger which he had foreseen.

A strong iron bar served him as a lever for moving the beams.

The work was executed so fast that it was rather a rapid growth than a construction. He who has never seen a military pontooner at his work can scarcely form an idea of this rapidity.

The eastern gullet was still narrower than the

western. There were but five or six feet of interval between the rocks. The smallness of this opening was an assistance. The space to be fortified and closed up being very little, the apparatus would be stronger, and might be more simple. Horizontal beams, therefore, sufficed, the upright ones being useless.

The first cross-pieces of the breakwater being fixed, Gilliatt mounted upon them and listened once more.

The murmurs had become significant.

He continued his construction. He supported it with the two catheads of the Durande, bound to the frame of beams by cords passed through the three pulley-sheaves. He made the whole fast by chains.

The construction was little more than a colossal hurdle, having beams for rods and chains in the place of wattles.

It seemed woven together quite as much as built.

He multiplied the fastenings, and added nails where they were necessary.

Having obtained a great quantity of bar iron from the wreck, he had been able to make a large number of these heavy nails.

While still at work, he broke some biscuit with his teeth. He was thirsty, but he could not drink, having no more fresh water. He had emptied the can at his meal of the evening before.

He added afterwards four or five more pieces of timber; then climbed again upon the barrier and listened.

The noises from the horizon had ceased; all was still.

The sea was smooth and quiet; deserving all those complimentary phrases which worthy citizens bestow upon it when pleased with it, — "a mirror," "a pond," "like oil," "a lamb," and so forth. The deep blue of the sky responded to the deep green tint of the ocean. The sapphire and the emerald hues vied with each other. Each was perfect. Not a cloud on high, not a line of foam below. In the midst of all this splendor the April sun rose magnificently. It was impossible to imagine a lovelier day.

On the verge of the horizon a flight of birds of passage formed a long dark line against the sky. They were flying fast, as if alarmed.

Gilliatt set to work again to raise the breakwater.

He raised it as high as he could; as high, indeed, as the curving of the rocks would permit.

Towards noon the sun appeared to him to give more than its usual warmth. Noon is the critical time of the day. Standing upon the powerful frame which he had built up, he paused again to survey the wide expanse.

The sea was more than tranquil; it was stagnant. No sail was visible. The sky was everywhere clear; but from blue it had become white. The whiteness was singular. To the west, and upon the horizon, was a little spot of a sickly hue. The spot remained in the same place, but by degrees grew larger. Near the breakers the waves shuddered, but very gently.

Gilliatt had done well to build his breakwater.

A tempest was approaching.

The elements had determined to give battle.

BOOK III.

THE STRUGGLE.

CHAPTER I.

EXTREMES MEET.

NOTHING is more threatening than a late equinox.

The appearance of the sea presents a strange phenomenon, resulting from what may be called the arrival of the ocean winds.

In all seasons, but particularly at the epoch of the syzygies, at the moment when least expected, the sea sometimes becomes singularly tranquil; that vast perpetual movement ceases; a sort of drowsiness and languor overspreads it, and it seems weary and about to rest. Every rag of bunting, from the tiny streamer of the fishing-boat to the great flag of ships of war, droops against the mast. The admiral's flag, the Royal and Imperial ensigns sleep alike.

Suddenly all these streamers begin to flutter gently.

If there happen to be clouds, the moment has then come for marking the formation of the *cirri;* if the sun is setting, for observing the red tints of the horizon; or if it be night and there is a moon, for looking attentively for the halo.

It is then that the captain or commander of a squadron, if he happen to possess one of those storm indicators, the inventor of which is unknown, notes his instrument carefully, and takes his precautions against the south wind if the clouds have an appearance like dissolved sugar, or against the north if they exfoliate in crystallizations like brakes of ferns or like fir woods. Then, too, the poor Irish or Breton fisherman, after having consulted some mysterious gnomon engraved by the Romans or by demons upon one of those straight enigmatical stones, which are called in Brittany "menhir" and in Ireland "cruach," hauls his boat upon the shore.

Meanwhile the serenity of sky and ocean continues. The day dawns radiant, and Aurora smiles. It was this which filled the old poets and seers with religious horror; for men dared to suspect the falsity of the sun, — "Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?"

The sombre vision of Nature's secret laws is interdicted to man by the fatal opacity of surrounding things. The most terrible and perfidious of her aspects is that which masks the convulsions of the deep.

Some hours, and even days at times, pass thus. Pilots raise their spy-glasses here and there. The faces of old seamen have always an expression of severity left upon them by the vexation of perpetually looking out for changes.

Suddenly a great confused murmur is heard. A sort of mysterious dialogue takes place in the air.

Nothing unusual is seen.

The wide expanse is tranquil.

Yet the noises increase. The dialogue becomes more audible.

There is something beyond the horizon, — something terrible. It is the wind.

The wind, — or rather that populace of Titans that we call the gale, the rabble of darkness.

India knew them as the Maroubs, Judea as the Keroubim, Greece as the Aquilones. They are the savage invisible winged creatures of the Infinite. Their boreal blasts sweep over the earth.

CHAPTER II.

THE OCEAN WINDS.

WHENCE do they come? From the immeasurable deep. Their wide wings need the breadth of the ocean gulf, the spaciousness of desert solitudes. The Atlantic, the Pacific — those vast blue plains — are their delight. They hasten thither in flocks. Commander Page witnessed far out at sea seven waterspouts at once. They wander there, wild and terrible. The ever-ending yet eternal flux and reflux is their work. The extent of their power, the limits of their will, none know. They are the Sphinxes of the abyss; Gama was their Œdipus. In that dark ever-moving expanse they appear with faces of cloud. He who perceives their pale lineaments in that wide dispersion, the horizon of the sea, feels himself in presence of a power beyond control. It might be imagined that the proximity of human intelligence disquieted them, and that they revolted against it. The mind of man is invincible, but the elements baffle him. He can do nothing against a power which is everywhere, and which none can bind. The gentle breath becomes a gale, smites with the force of a war-club, and then becomes gentle again. The winds attack with a terrible crash, and defend themselves by fading

into nothingness. He who would encounter them must use artifice. Their varying tactics, their swift redoubled blows, confuse. They fly as often as they attack. They are tenacious and impalpable. Who can circumvent them? The prow of the Argo, cut from an oak of Dodona's grove, that mysterious pilot of the bark, spoke to them, and they insulted that pilot-goddess. Columbus, beholding their approach against the "Pinta," mounted upon the poop and addressed them with the first verses of Saint John's Gospel. Surcouf defied them. "Here come the gang," he used to say. Napier greeted them with cannon-balls. They assume the dictatorship of chaos.

Chaos is theirs, in which to wreak their mysterious vengeance. The den of the winds is more monstrous than that of lions. How many corpses lie in its deep recesses, where the howling gusts sweep without pity over that obscure and ghastly mass! The winds are heard wheresoever they go, but they give ear to none. Their acts resemble crimes. None know on whom they cast their hoary surf. With what ferocity they hover over shipwrecks, looking at times as if they flung their impious foam-flakes in the face of heaven! How they affront and defy, Providence itself! They are the tyrants of unknown regions. "Luoghi spaventosi," murmured the Venetian mariners.

The trembling fields of space are subjected to their fierce assaults. Things unspeakable come to pass in those deserted regions. Some horseman rides in the gloom; the air is full of a forest sound; nothing is

visible, but the tramp of cavalcades is heard. The noonday is overcast with sudden night: a tornado passes. Or it is midnight, which suddenly becomes bright as day; the polar lights are in the heavens. Whirlwinds pass in opposite ways, and in a sort of hideous dance, — a stamping of the storms upon the waters. A cloud overburdened opens and falls to earth. Other clouds filled with red light flash and roar, then frown again ominously. Emptied of their lightnings, they are but as spent brands. Pent-up rains dissolve in mists. Yonder sea appears a fiery furnace in which the rains are falling; flames seem to issue from the waves. The white gleam of the ocean under the shower is reflected to marvellous distances. The different masses transform themselves into uncouth shapes. Monstrous whirlpools make strange hollows in the sky. The vapors revolve, the waves spin, the giddy Naiads roll; the sea, massive and calm, is not displaced in its movement; everything is livid; noises as of cries of despair come from the pale regions of sea and sky.

Great sheaves of shadow and darkness are gathered up, trembling in the far depths of the sky. Now and then there is a convulsion. The rumor becomes tumult, as the wave becomes surge. The horizon, a confused mass of strata, oscillating ceaselessly, murmurs in a continual undertone. Strange and sudden outbursts break through the monotony. Cold airs rush forth, succeeded by warm blasts. The trepidation of the sea betokens anxious expectation, agony, terror profound. Suddenly the hurricane comes down, like a wild beast, to drink of the ocean, — a mon-

strous draught! The sea rises to the invisible mouth, a mound of water is formed, the swell increases, and the waterspout appears,—the Prester of the ancients, stalactite above, stalagmite below, a whirling double-inverted cone, a point in equilibrium upon another, the embrace of two mountains,—a mountain of foam ascending, a mountain of vapor descending,—terrible coition of the cloud and the wave. Like the column in Holy Writ, the waterspout is dark by day and luminous by night. In its presence the thunder itself is silent, and seems cowed.

The vast commotion of those solitudes has its gamut,—a terrible crescendo. There are the gust, the squall, the storm, the gale, the tempest, the whirlwind, the waterspout,—the seven chords of the lyre of the winds, the seven notes of the firmament. The heavens are a clear space, the sea a vast round; but a breath passes, they have vanished, and all is fury and wild confusion.

Such are these inhospitable realms.

The winds rush, fly, swoop down, dwindle away, begin again, hover above, whistle, roar, and smile; they are frenzied, wanton, unbridled, or sinking at ease upon the raging waves. Their howlings have a harmony of their own; they make all the heavens sonorous; they blow in the cloud as in a trumpet; they sing through the infinite space with the mingled tones of clarions, horns, bugles, and trumpets,—a sort of Promethean fanfare.

Such was the music of ancient Pan. Their harmonies are terrible. They have a colossal joy in the darkness. They drive and disperse great ships. Night

and day, in all seasons, from the tropics to the pole, there is no truce; sounding their fatal trumpet through the tangled thickets of the clouds and waves, they pursue the grim chase of vessels in distress. They have their packs of bloodhounds, and take their pleasure setting them to bark among the rocks and billows. They huddle the clouds together, and drive them apart. They mould and knead the vast and supple waters as with a million hands.

The water is supple because it is incompressible. It slips away without effort. Borne down on one side, it escapes on the other. It is thus that waters become waves, and that the billows are a token of their liberty.

CHAPTER III.

THE NOISES EXPLAINED.

THE grand descent of winds upon the world takes place at the equinoxes. At this period the balance of tropic and pole librates, and the vast atmospheric tides pour their flood upon one hemisphere and their ebb upon another. The signs of Libra and Aquarius have reference to these phenomena.

It is the time of tempests.

The sea awaits their coming, keeping silence.

Sometimes the sky looks sickly. Its face is wan; a thick dark veil obscures it. The mariners observe with uneasiness the angry aspect of the clouds.

But it is its air of calm contentment which they dread the most. When the sky smiles in the equinoxes the tempest is playing with her victim. It was under skies like these that the Tower of Weeping Women, in Amsterdam, was filled with wives and mothers scanning the far horizon.

When the vernal or autumnal storms delay to break, they are gathering strength, — hoarding up their fury for more sure destruction. Beware of the gale that has been long delayed! It was Angot who said that "the sea pays well old debts."

When the delay is unusually long the sea betokens her impatience only by a deeper calm; but the mag-

netic intensity manifests itself by what might be called a fiery humor in the sea. Fire issues from the waves; electric air, phosphoric water. The sailors feel a strange lassitude. This time is particularly perilous for iron vessels; their hulls are then liable to produce variations of the compass, leading them to destruction. The Transatlantic steam-vessel "Iowa" perished from this cause.

To those who are familiar with the sea its aspect at these moments is singular. It may be imagined to be both desiring and fearing the approach of the cyclone. Certain unions, though strongly urged by Nature, are attended by this strange conjunction of terror and desire. The lioness in her tenderest moods flies from the lion. Thus the sea, in the fire of her passion, trembles at the near approach of her union with the tempest. The nuptials are prepared. Like the marriages of the ancient emperors, they are celebrated with immolations. The fête is heralded with disasters.

Meanwhile, from yonder deeps, from the great open sea, from the unapproachable latitudes, from the lurid horizon of the watery waste, from the utmost bounds of the free ocean, the winds pour down.

Listen, for this is the famous equinox.

The storm prepares mischief. In the old mythology these entities were recognized, indistinctly moving, in the grand scene of Nature. Æolus plotted with Boreas. The alliance of element with element is necessary; they divide their task. Impetus must be given to the wave, the cloud, the stream: night is an auxiliary, and must be employed. There are

compasses to be falsified, beacons to be extinguished, lanterns of light-houses to be masked, stars to be hidden. The sea must lend her aid. Every storm is preceded by a murmur. Behind the horizon line there is a premonitory whispering among the hurricanes.

This is the noise which is heard afar off in the darkness amid the terrible silence of the sea.

It was this significant whispering which Gilliatt had noted. The phosphorescence on the water had been the first warning, this murmur the second.

If the demon Legion exists, he is assuredly no other than the wind.

The wind is complex, but the air is one.

Hence it follows that all storms are mixed, — a principle which results from the unity of the air.

The entire abyss of heaven takes part in a tempest, — the entire ocean also. The totality of its forces is marshalled for the strife. A wave is the ocean gulf, a gust is a gulf of the atmosphere. A contest with a storm is a contest with all the powers of sea and sky.

It was Messier, that great authority among naval men, the pensive astronomer of the little lodge at Cluny, who said, "The wind comes from everywhere, and is everywhere." He had no faith in the idea of winds imprisoned, even in inland seas. With him there were no Mediterranean winds; he declared that he recognized them as they wandered about the earth. He affirmed that on a certain day, at a certain hour, the Föhn of the Lake of Constance — the ancient Favonius of Lucretius — had traversed

the horizon of Paris; on another day, the Bora of the Adriatic; on another day, the whirling Notus, which is supposed to be confined in the round of the Cyclades. He indicated their currents. He did not believe it impossible that the Autan which circulates between Corsica and the Balearic Isles could escape from its bounds. He did not admit the theory of winds imprisoned like bears in their dens. It was he, too, who said that "every rain comes from the tropics, and every flash of lightning from the pole." The wind, in fact, becomes saturated with electricity at the intersection of the colures which mark the extremity of the axis, and with water at the equator, bringing moisture from the equatorial line, and the electric fluid from the poles.

The wind is ubiquitous.

It is certainly not meant by this that the winds never move in zones. Nothing is better established than the existence of those continuous air-currents; and aerial navigation by means of the wind-boats, to which the passion for Greek terminology has given the name of "aeroscaphes," may one day succeed in utilizing the chief of these streams of wind. The regular course of air-streams is an incontestable fact. There are both rivers of wind and rivulets of wind, although their branches are exactly the reverse of water-currents; for in the air it is the rivulets which flow out of the rivers, and the smaller rivers which flow out of the great streams, instead of falling into them. Hence instead of concentration we have dispersion.

The united action of the winds and the unity of the atmosphere result from this dispersion. The displacement of one molecule produces the displacement of another. The vast body of air becomes subject to one agitation. To these profound causes of coalition we must add the irregular surface of the earth, whose mountains furrow the atmosphere, contorting and diverting the winds from their course, and determining the directions of counter-currents in infinite radiations.

The phenomenon of the wind is the oscillation of two oceans one against the other; the ocean of air, superimposed upon the ocean of water, rests upon these currents, and is convulsed with this vast agitation.

The indivisible cannot produce separate action. No partition divides wave from wave. The islands of the Channel feel the influence of the Cape of Good Hope. Navigation everywhere contends with the same monster; the sea is one hydra. The waves cover it as with a coat of scales. The ocean is Ceto.

Upon that unity reposes an infinite variety.

CHAPTER IV.

TURBA TURMA.

ACCORDING to the compass there are thirty-two winds,—that is to say, thirty-two points, or directions. But these directions may be subdivided indefinitely. Classed by its directions, the wind is incalculable; classed by its kinds, it is infinite. Homer himself would have shrunk from the task of enumerating them.

The polar current encounters the tropical current. Heat and cold are thus combined; the equilibrium is disturbed by a shock, the wave of wind issues forth and is distended, scattered, and broken up in every direction in fierce streams. The dispersion of the gusts shakes the streaming locks of the wind upon the four corners of the horizon.

All the winds which blow are there,—the wind of the Gulf Stream, which disgorges the great fogs of Newfoundland; the wind of Peru, in the region of silent heavens, where no man ever heard the thunder roar; the wind of Nova Scotia, where flies the great auk (*Alca impennis*), with his furrowed beak; the iron whirlwinds of the Chinese seas; the wind of Mozambique, which destroys the canoes and junks; the electric wind, which the people of Japan

denounce by the beating of a gong; the African wind, which blows between Table Mountain and the Devil's Peak, where it gains its liberty; the currents of the equator, which pass over the trade-winds, describing a parabola, the summit of which is always to the west; the Plutonian wind, which issues from craters, the terrible breath of flames; the singular wind peculiar to the volcano Awa, which occasions a perpetual olive tint in the north; the Java monsoon, against which the people construct those casemates known as hurricane-houses; the branching north winds, called by the English bush winds; the curved squalls of the Straits of Malacca, observed by Horsburgh; the powerful southwest wind, called Pampero in Chili, and Rebojo at Buenos Ayres, which carries the great condor out to sea and saves him from the pit where the savage, concealed under a bullock-hide newly stripped, watches for him lying on his back and bending his great bow with his feet; the chemical wind, which, according to Lemery, produces thunderbolts from the clouds; the Harmattan of the Caffres; the Polar snow-driver, which harnesses itself to the everlasting icebergs; the wind of the Gulf of Bengal, which sweeps over a continent to pillage the triangular town of wooden booths at Nijni-Novgorod, in which is held the great fair of Asia; the wind of the Cordilleras, agitator of great waves and forests; the wind of the Australian Archipelago, where the bee-hunters take the wild hives hidden under the forks of the branches of the giant eucalyptus; the Sirocco, the Mistral, the Hurricane, the dry winds, the inundating and diluvian

winds, the torrid winds which scatter dust from the plains of Brazil upon the streets of Genoa, which both obey and revolt against the diurnal rotation, and of which Herrera said, "Malo viento torna contra el sol;" those winds which hunt in couples, conspiring mischief, the one undoing the work of the other; and those old winds which assailed Columbus on the coast of Veragua, and during forty days, from the 21st of October to the 28th of November, 1520, delayed and nearly frustrated Magellan's approach to the Pacific; and those which dismasted the Armada and confounded Philip II. Others, too, there are, of the names of which there is no end. The winds, for instance, which carry showers of frogs and locusts, and drive before them clouds of living things across the ocean; those which blow in what are called wind-leaps, and whose function is to destroy ships at sea; those which at a single blast throw the cargo out of trim, and compel the vessel to continue her course half broadside over; the winds which construct the circumcumuli; the winds which mass together the circumstrati; the dark, heavy winds swelled with rains; the winds of the hailstorms; the fever-winds, whose approach sets the salt springs and sulphur springs of Calabria boiling; those which give a glittering appearance to the fur of African panthers prowling among the bushes of Cape Ferro; those which come shaking from the cloud, like the tongue of a trigonocephal, the terrible forked lightning; and those which bring whirlwinds of black snow. Such is the legion of winds.

The Douvres rock heard their distant tramp at the moment when Gilliatt was constructing his breakwater.

As we have said, the Wind includes all winds.

This horde pressed fast upon him; on one side was Legion, and on the other Gilliatt.

CHAPTER V.

GILLIATT'S ALTERNATIVES.

THE mysterious forces had chosen their time well.

Chance, if chance exists, is sometimes far-seeing.

While the sloop had been anchored in the little creek of The Man rock, and as long as the machinery had been prisoned in the wreck, Gilliatt's position had been impregnable. The sloop was in safety, the machinery sheltered. The Douvres, which held the hull of the Durande fast, condemned it to slow destruction, but protected it against unexpected accidents. In any event, one resource had remained to him. If the engine had been destroyed, Gilliatt would have been uninjured. He had still the sloop by which to escape.

But to wait till the sloop was removed from the anchorage where she was inaccessible; to allow it to be fixed in the defile of the Douvres; to watch until the sloop, too, was as it were entangled in the rocks; to permit him to complete the salvage, the moving, and the final embarkation of the machinery; to do no damage to that wonderful construction by which one man was enabled to put the whole aboard his bark; to acquiesce, in fact, in the success of his exploits so far, — this was but the trap which the

elements had laid for him. Now for the first time he began to perceive in all its sinister characteristics the trick which the sea had been meditating so long.

The machinery, the sloop, and their master were all now within the gorge of the rocks. They formed but a single point. One blow, and the sloop might be dashed to pieces on the rock, the machinery destroyed, and Gilliatt drowned.

The situation could not have been more critical.

The sphinx which men have imagined concealing herself in the cloud seemed to mock him with a dilemma.

"Go or stay."

To go would have been madness; to remain was terrible.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COMBAT.

GILLIATT ascended to the summit of the Great Douvre.

From hence he could see around the horizon.

The western side was appalling. A wall of cloud spread across it, barring the wide expanse from side to side, and ascending slowly from the horizon towards the zenith. This wall, straight-lined, vertical, without a crevice in its height, without a rent in its structure, seemed built by the square and measured by the plumb-line. It was cloud in the likeness of granite. Its escarpment, completely perpendicular at the southern extremity, curved a little towards the north, like a bent sheet of iron, presenting the steep slippery face of an inclined plane. The dark wall enlarged and grew; but its entablature never ceased for a moment to be parallel with the horizon line, which was almost indistinguishable in the gathering darkness. Silently, and all together, the airy battlements ascended. No undulation, no wrinkle, no projection changed its shape or moved its place. The aspect of this immobililty in movement was impressive. The sun, pale in the midst of a strange sickly transparence, lighted up this outline of the Apoca-

lypse. Already the cloudy bank had blotted out one half the space of the sky, shelving like the fearful talus of the abyss. It was the uprising of a dark mountain between earth and heaven.

It was night falling suddenly upon mid-day.

There was a heat in the air as from an oven-door, coming from that mysterious mass on mass. The sky, which from blue had become white, was now turning from white to a slaty gray. The sea beneath was leaden-hued and dull. There was no breath, no wave, no noise. Far as eye could reach was the desert ocean. No sail was visible on any side. The birds had disappeared. Some monstrous treason seemed abroad.

The wall of cloud grew visibly larger.

This moving mountain of vapors, which was approaching the Douvres, was one of those clouds which might be called the clouds of battle. Sinister appearances; some strange, furtive glance seemed cast upon the beholder through that obscure mass up-piled.

The approach was terrible.

Gilliatt observed it closely, and muttered to himself, "I am thirsty enough, but you will give me plenty to drink."

He stood there motionless a few moments, his eye fixed upon the cloud-bank, as if mentally taking a sounding of the tempest.

His *galérienne* was in the pocket of his jacket; he took it out and placed it on his head. Then he fetched from the cave, which had so long served him for a sleeping-place, a few things which he had kept there in reserve; he put on his overalls, and attired

himself in his waterproof overcoat, like a knight who puts on his armor at the moment of battle. He had no shoes; but his naked feet had become hardened to the rocks.

This preparation for the storm being completed, he looked down upon his breakwater, grasped the knotted cord hurriedly, descended from the plateau of the Douvre, stepped on to the rocks below, and hastened to his store cavern. A few moments later he was at work. The vast silent cloud might have heard the strokes of his hammer. With the nails, ropes, and beams which still remained, he constructed for the eastern gullet a second frame, which he succeeded in fixing at ten or twelve feet from the other.

The silence was still profound. The blades of grass between the cracks of the rocks were not stirred.

The sun disappeared suddenly. Gilliatt looked up.

The rising cloud had just reached it. It was like the blotting out of day, succeeded by a mingled pale reflection.

The immense wall of cloud had changed its appearance. It no longer retained its unity. It had curved on reaching the zenith, whence it spread horizontally over the rest of the heavens. It had now its various stages. The tempest formation was visible, like the strata in the side of a trench. It was possible to distinguish the layers of the rain from the beds of hail. There was no lightning, but a horrible, diffused glare; for the idea of horror may be attached to light. The vague breathing of the storm was

audible ; the silence was broken by an obscure palpitation. Gilliatt, silent also, watched the giant blocks of vapor grouping themselves overhead, forming the shapeless mass of clouds. Upon the horizon brooded and lengthened out a band of mist of ashen hue ; in the zenith was another band of lead-color. Pale, ragged fragments of cloud hung from the great mass above upon the mist below. The pile of cloud which formed the background was wan, dull, gloomy. A thin, whitish transverse cloud, coming no one could tell whither, cut the high dark wall obliquely from north to south. One of the extremities of this cloud trailed along the surface of the sea. At the point where it touched the waters, a dense red vapor was visible in the midst of the darkness. Below it, smaller clouds, quite black and very low, were flying as if bewildered, or moved by opposite currents of air. The immense cloud beyond increased from all points at once, darkened the eclipse, and continued to spread its sombre pall. In the east, behind Gilliatt, there was only one clear porch in the heavens, which was rapidly being closed. Without any feeling of wind abroad, a strange flight of gray downy particles seemed to pass ; they were fine, and scattered as if some gigantic bird had been plucked of its plumage behind the bank of cloud. A dark compact roof had gradually formed itself, which on the verge of the horizon touched the sea, and mingled in darkness with it. The beholder had a vague sense of something advancing steadily towards him. It was vast, heavy, ominous. Suddenly an immense peal of thunder burst upon the air.

Gilliatt himself felt the shock. Thunder startles us as some dreams do. The rude reality in the midst of that visionary region has something terrific in it. The listener might fancy that he hears something falling in the chamber of giants. No electric flash accompanied the report. It was a blind peal. The silence was profound again. There was an interval, as when combatants take up their position. Then appeared slowly, one after the other, great shapeless flashes; these flashes were silent. At each flash everything was illumined. The wall of cloud was now a vast cavern, with roofs and arches. Outlines of forms were traceable among them; monstrous heads were vaguely shadowed forth; rocks seemed to stretch out; elephants bearing turrets, seen for a moment, vanished. A column of vapor, straight, round, and dark, and surmounted by a white mist, simulated the form of a colossal steam-vessel ingulfed, hissing and smoking beneath the waves. Sheets of cloud undulated like folds of giant flags. In the centre, under a thick crimson pall, a nucleus of dense fog sunk motionless, inert, impenetrable by the electric fires, — a sort of hideous fœtus in the bosom of the tempest.

Suddenly Gilliatt felt a breath moving his hair. Two or three large spots of rain fell heavily around him on the rock. Then there was a second thunderclap. The wind was rising.

The terror of darkness was at its highest point. The first peal of thunder had shaken the sea; the second rent the wall of cloud from top to base; a breach was visible; the pent-up deluge rushed to-

wards it; the rent became like a gulf filled with rain. The outpouring of the tempest had begun.

The moment was terrible.

Rain, wind, lightnings, thunder, waves swirling upwards to the clouds, foam, hoarse noises, whistlings mingled together like monsters suddenly unloosened.

For a solitary man, imprisoned with an overloaded vessel, between two dangerous rocks in mid-ocean, no crisis could have been more menacing. The danger of the tide, over which he had triumphed, was nothing compared with the danger of the tempest.

Surrounded on all sides by dangers, Gilliatt, at the last moment, and before the crowning peril, had developed an ingenious strategy. He had secured his basis of operations in the enemies' territory; had pressed the rock into his service. The Douvres, originally his enemy, had become his second in that immense duel. Out of that sepulchre he had constructed a fortress. He was built up among those formidable sea ruins. He was blockaded, but well defended. He had, so to speak, set his back against the wall, and stood face to face with the hurricane. He had barricaded the narrow strait, that highway of the waves. This indeed was the only possible course. It seemed as if the ocean, like other despots, might be brought to reason by the aid of barricades. The sloop might be considered secure on three sides. Closely wedged between the two interior walls of the rock, made fast by three anchorings, she was sheltered on the north by the Little Douvre, on the south by the Great one: terrible escarpments, more accustomed to wreck vessels than to save them. On the western

side she was protected by the frame of timbers made fast and nailed to the rocks, a tried barrier which had withstood the rude flood-tide of the sea; a veritable citadel-gate, having for its sides the columns of the rock, — the two Douvres themselves. Nothing was to be feared from that side. It was on the eastern side only that there was danger.

On that side there was no protection but the breakwater. A breakwater is an apparatus for dividing and distributing. It requires at least two frames. Gilliatt had only had time to construct one. He was compelled to build the second in the very presence of the tempest.

Fortunately the wind came from the northwest. The wind is not always adroit in its attacks. The northwest wind, which is the ancient *galerno*, had little effect upon the Douvres. It assailed the rocks in flank, and drove the waves neither against the one nor the other of the two gullets; so that instead of rushing into a defile, they dashed themselves against a wall. The storm had made a bungling attack.

But the currents of the wind are curved, and it was probable that there would be some sudden change. If it should veer to the east before the second frame could be constructed, the peril would be great. The irruption of the sea into the gorge would be complete, and all would probably be lost.

The wildness of the storm went on increasing. The essence of a tempest is the rapid succession of its blows. That is its strength; but it is also its weakness. Its fury gives the opportunity to human intelligence, and man spies its weak points for his

defence; but under what overwhelming assaults! No respite, no interruption, no truce, no pause for taking breath. There seems an unspeakable cowardice in that prodigality of inexhaustible resources.

All the tumult of the wide expanse rushed towards the Douvres. Voices were heard in the darkness. What could they be? The ancient terror of the sea was there. At times they seemed to speak as if some one was uttering words of command. There were clamors, strange trepidations, and then that majestic roar which the mariners call the "Ocean's call." The indefinite and flying eddies of the wind whistled, while curling the waves and flinging them like giant quoits, cast by invisible athletes, against the breakers. The enormous surf streamed over all the rocks: torrents above, foam below. Then the roaring was redoubled. No uproar of men or beasts could yield an idea of that din which mingled with the incessant breaking of the sea. The clouds cannonaded, the hail-stones poured their volleys, the surf mounted to the assault. In some places the sea seemed motionless; in others the wind drove on the surf twenty fathoms a second. As far as the eye could reach the sea was white; ten leagues of yeasty water filled the horizon. Doors of fire were opened, clouds seemed burned by clouds, and showed like smoke above a nebulous red mass resembling burning embers. Floating conflagrations rushed together and amalgamated, each changing the shape of the other. Floods of water streamed from the sky; the firmament seemed to be firing by platoons. From the midst of the dark roof a terrible arsenal appeared to be emptied out, hurling down-

ward from the gulf, pell-mell, waterspouts, hail, torrents, purple fire, phosphoric gleams, darkness and lightnings.

Meanwhile Gilliatt seemed to pay no attention to the storm. His head was bent over his work. The second framework began to approach completion. To every clap of thunder he replied with a blow of his hammer, making a cadence which was audible even amid that tumult. He was bareheaded, for a gust had carried away his *galérienne.*

He suffered from a burning thirst. Little pools of rain had formed in the rocks around him. From time to time he took some water in the hollow of his hand and drank. Then, without even looking upward to observe the storm, he applied himself anew to his task.

All might depend upon a moment. He knew the fate that awaited him if his breakwater should not be completed in time. Of what avail could it be to lose a moment in looking for the approach of death?

The turmoil around him was like that of a vast bubbling caldron. Crash and uproar were everywhere. Sometimes the lightning seemed to descend a sort of ladder. The electric flame returned incessantly to the same points of the rock, where there were probably veins of diorite. Hailstones fell, of enormous size. Gilliatt was compelled to shake the folds of his overcoat, even the pockets of which became filled with hail.

The storm had now rotated to the west, and was expending its fury upon the barricades of the two Douvres. But Gilliatt had faith in his breakwaters, and with good reason. These barricades, made of a

great portion of the forepart of the Durande, took the shock of the waves easily. Elasticity is a resistance. The experiments of Stephenson establish the fact that against the waves, which are themselves elastic, a raft of timber, of given dimensions, joined and chained together in a certain fashion, will form a more powerful obstacle than a breakwater of masonry. The barriers of the Douvres fulfilled these conditions. They were, moreover, so ingeniously made fast that the waves striking them beneath were like hammers beating in nails, pressing and consolidating the work upon the rocks. To demolish them it would have been necessary to overthrow the Douvres themselves. The surf, in fact, was only able to cast over upon the sloop some flakes of foam. On that side, thanks to the barrier, the tempest ended only in harmless insult. Gilliatt turned his back upon the scene. He heard composedly its useless rage upon the rocks behind him.

The foam-flakes coming from all sides were like flights of down. The vast irritated ocean deluged the rocks, dashed over them and raged within, penetrated into the network of their interior fissures, and issued again from the granitic masses by the narrow chinks, forming a kind of inexhaustible fountain, playing peacefully in the midst of that deluge. Here and there a silvery network fell gracefully from these spouts in the sea. The second frame of the eastern barrier was nearly completed. A few more knots of rope and ends of chains, and this new rampart would be ready to play its part in barring out the storm.

Suddenly there was a great brightness; the rain

ceased; the clouds rolled asunder; the wind had just shifted; a sort of high, dark window opened in the zenith, and the lightnings were extinguished. The end seemed to have come. It was but the beginning.

The change of wind was from the northwest to the northeast.

The storm was preparing to burst forth again with a new legion of hurricanes. The north was about to mount to the assault. Sailors call this dreaded moment of transition the return-storm. The southern wind brings most rain, the north wind most lightning.

The attack, coming now from the east, was directed against the weak point of the position.

This time Gilliatt interrupted his work and looked around him.

He stood erect, upon a curved projection of the rock behind the second barrier, which was nearly finished. If the first frame had been carried away, it would have broken down the second, which was not yet consolidated, and must have crushed him. Gilliatt, in the place that he had chosen, must in that case have been destroyed before seeing the sloop, the machinery, and all his work shattered and swallowed up in the gulf. Such was the possibility which awaited him. He accepted it, and, what is still more terrible, desired it.

In that wreck of all his hope, to die at once would have been his desire, — to die first, as he would have regarded it; for the machinery produced in his mind the effect of a living being. He moved

aside his hair, which was beaten over his eyes by the wind, grasped his trusty mallet, drew himself up in a menacing attitude, and awaited the event.

He was not kept long in suspense.

A flash of lightning gave the signal; the livid opening in the zenith closed; a driving torrent of rain fell; then all became dark, save where the lightnings broke forth once more. The attack had recommenced in earnest.

A heavy swell, visible from time to time in the blaze of the lightning, was rolling in the east beyond The Man rock. It resembled a huge wall of glass. It was green and without foam, and it stretched across the wide expanse. It was advancing towards the breakwater, increasing as it approached. It was a singular kind of dark gigantic cylinder, rolling upon the ocean. The thunder kept up a hollow rumbling.

The great wave struck The Man rock, broke in twain, and passed beyond. The broken wave, rejoined, formed a mountain of water, and instead of advancing in parallel line as before, came down perpendicularly upon the breakwater, in the shape of an enormous beam.

The shock was terrific: the whole wave became a roaring surf.

It is impossible for those who have not witnessed them to imagine those snowy avalanches which the sea thus precipitates, and under which it ingulfs for the moment rocks more than a hundred feet in height, — such, for example, as the Great Anderlo at Guernsey, and the Pinnacle at Jersey. At St. Mary

of Madagascar it passes completely over the promontory of Tintingue.

For some moments the sea drowned everything. Nothing was visible except the furious waters, — an enormous breadth of foam, the whiteness of a winding-sheet blowing in the draught of a sepulchre; nothing was heard but the roaring storm working devastation around.

When the foam subsided, Gilliatt was still standing at his post.

The barrier had stood firm. Not a chain was broken, not a nail displaced. It had exhibited under the trial the two chief qualities of a breakwater; it had proved flexible as a hurdle and firm as a wall. The surf falling upon it had dissolved into a shower of drops.

A river of foam rushing along the zigzags of the defile subsided as it approached the sloop.

The man who had put this curb upon the fury of the ocean took no rest.

The storm fortunately turned aside its fury for a moment. The fierce attack of the waves was renewed upon the wall of the rock. There was a respite, and Gilliatt took advantage of it to complete the interior barrier.

The daylight faded while he was thus laboring. The hurricane continued its violence upon the flank of the rocks with a mournful solemnity. The stores of fire and water in the sky poured out incessantly without exhausting themselves. The undulations of the wind above and below were like the movements of a dragon.

Nightfall brought scarcely any deeper night; the change was hardly felt, for the darkness was never complete. Tempests, alternately darkening and illumining by their lightnings, are merely intervals of the visible and invisible. All is pale glare, and then all is darkness. Spectral shapes issue forth suddenly, and return as suddenly into the deep shade.

A phosphoric zone, tinged with the hue of the aurora borealis, appeared like ghastly flames behind the dense clouds, giving to all things a wan aspect, and making the rain-drifts luminous.

This uncertain light aided Gilliatt, and directed him in his operations. Once he turned from his work, and said to the lightning, "Hold the candle for me!" By its help he was enabled to raise the forward barrier. The breakwater was now almost complete. As he was engaged in making fast a powerful cable to the last beam, the gale blew directly in his face; this compelled him to raise his head. The wind had shifted abruptly to the north-east. The assault upon the eastern gullet recommenced. Gilliatt cast his eyes around the horizon. Another great wall of water was approaching.

The wave broke with a great shock; a second followed; then another and another still; then five or six almost together; then a last shock of tremendous force.

This last wave, which was an accumulation of forces, had a singular resemblance to a living thing. It would not have been difficult to imagine in the midst of that swelling mass the shapes of fins and gill-coverings. It fell heavily, and broke upon the

barriers. Its almost animal form was torn to pieces in the shape of spouts and gushes, resembling the crushing to death of some sea hydra upon that block of rocks and timbers. The swell rushed through, subsiding but devastating as it went. The huge wave seemed to bite and cling to its victim as it died. The rock shook to its base. A savage howling mingled with the roar; the foam flew far, like the spouting of a leviathan.

The subsidence exhibited the extent of the ravages of the surf. This last escalade had not been ineffectual. The breakwater had suffered this time. A long and heavy beam, torn from the first barrier, had been carried over the second, and hurled violently upon the projecting rock on which Gilliatt had stood but a moment before. By good fortune he had not returned there. Had he done so his death would have been inevitable.

There was a remarkable circumstance in the fall of this beam, which by preventing the framework rebounding, saved Gilliatt from greater dangers. It even proved useful to him, as will be seen, in another way.

Between the projecting rock and the interior wall of the defile there was a large interval, something like the notch of an axe or the split of a wedge. One of the extremities of the timber hurled into the air by the waves had stuck fast into this notch in falling. The gap had become enlarged.

Gilliatt was struck with an idea: it was that of bearing heavily on the other extremity.

The beam, caught by one end in the nook, which

it had widened, projected from it straight as an outstretched arm. This species of arm projected parallel with the anterior wall of the defile, and the disengaged end stretched from its resting-place about eighteen or twenty inches, — a good distance for the object to be attained.

Gilliatt raised himself by means of his hands, feet, and knees to the escarpment, and then turned his back, pressing both his shoulders against the enormous lever. The beam was long, which increased its raising power. The rock was already loosened; but he was compelled to renew his efforts again and again. The sweat-drops rolled from his forehead as rapidly as the spray. The fourth attempt exhausted all his powers. There was a cracking noise; the gap, spreading in the shape of a fissure, opened its vast jaws, and the heavy mass fell into the narrow space of the defile with a noise like the echo of the thunder.

The mass fell straight, and without breaking, — resting in its bed like a Druid cromlech precipitated in one piece.

The beam which had served as a lever descended with the rock, and Gilliatt, stumbling forward as it gave way, narrowly escaped falling.

The bed of the pass at this part was full of huge round stones, and there was little water. The monolith lying in the boiling foam, the flakes of which fell on Gilliatt where he stood, stretched from side to side of the great parallel rocks of the defile, and formed a transversal wall, — a sort of cross-stroke between the two escarpments. Its two ends touched the rocks.

It had been a little too long to lie flat, but its summit of soft rock was struck off with the fall. The result of this fall was a singular sort of *cul-de-sac*, which may still be seen. The water behind this stony barrier is almost always tranquil.

This was a rampart more invincible still than the forward timbers of the Durande fixed between the two Douvres.

The barrier came opportunely.

The assaults of the sea had continued. The obstinacy of the waves is always increased by an obstacle. The first frame began to show signs of breaking up. One breach, however small, in a breakwater, is always serious. It inevitably enlarges, and there is no means of supplying its place, for the sea would sweep away the workmen.

A flash which lighted up the rocks revealed to Gilliatt the nature of the mischief,— the beams broken down, the ends of rope and fragments of chain swinging in the winds, and a rent in the centre of the apparatus. The second frame was intact.

Though the block of stone so powerfully overturned by Gilliatt in the defile behind the breakwater was the strongest possible barrier, it had a defect. It was too low. The surge could not destroy, but could sweep over it.

It was useless to think of building it higher. Nothing but masses of rock could avail upon a barrier of stone; but how could such masses be detached; or, if detached, how could they be moved, or raised, or piled, or fixed? Timbers may be added, but rocks cannot be.

Gilliatt was not Enceladus.

The insufficient height of this rocky isthmus rendered him anxious.

The effects of this fault were not long in showing themselves. The assaults upon the breakwater were incessant; the heavy seas seemed not merely to rage, but to attack with determination to destroy it. A sort of trampling noise was heard upon the jarring framework.

Suddenly the end of a binding strake, detached from the dislocated frame, was swept away over the second barrier and across the transversal rock, falling in the defile, where the water seized and carried it into the sinuosities of the pass. Gilliatt lost sight of it. It seemed probable that it would do some injury to the sloop. Fortunately, the water in the interior of the rocks, shut in on all sides, felt little of the commotion without. The waves there were comparatively trifling, and the shock was not likely to be very severe. However, he had little time to spare for reflection upon this mishap, if mishap it was. Every variety of danger was arising at once; the tempest was concentrated upon the vulnerable point; destruction was imminent.

The darkness was profound for a moment: the lightnings paused, — a sort of sinister connivance. The cloud and the sea became one: there was a dull peal.

This was followed by a terrible outburst. The frame which formed the front of the barriers was swept away. The fragments of beams were visible in the rolling waters. The sea was using the first

breakwater as an engine for making a breach in the second.

Gilliatt experienced the feeling of a general who sees his advanced guard driven in.

The second construction of beams resisted the shock. The apparatus behind it was powerfully secured and buttressed; but the broken frame was heavy, and was at the mercy of the waves, which were incessantly hurling it forward and withdrawing it. The ropes and chains which remained unsevered prevented its entirely breaking up, and the qualities which Gilliatt had given it as a means of defence made it, in the end, a more effective weapon of destruction. Instead of a buckler, it had become a battering-ram. Besides this, it was now full of irregularities from breaking; ends of timbers projected from all parts; and it was, as it were, covered with teeth and spikes. No sort of arm could have been more effective, or more fitted for the handling of the tempest. It was the projectile, while the sea played the part of the catapult.

The blows succeeded each other with a dismal regularity. Gilliatt, thoughtful and anxious, behind that barricaded portal listened to the sound of death knocking loudly for admittance.

He reflected with bitterness that but for the fatal entanglement of the funnel of the Durande in the wreck he would have been at that very moment, and even since the morning, once more at Guernsey, in the port, with the sloop out of danger, and with the machinery saved.

The dreaded moment arrived. The destruction

was complete. There was a sound like a death-rattle. The entire frame of the breakwater, the double apparatus crushed and mingled confusedly, came in a whirl of foam, rushing upon the stone barricade like chaos upon a mountain, where it stopped. Here the fragments lay together, a mass of beams penetrable by the waves, but still breaking their force. The conquered barrier struggled nobly against destruction. The waves had shattered it, and in their turn were shattered against it. Though overthrown, it still remained in some degree effective. The rock which barred its passage, an immovable obstacle, held it fast. The defile, as we have said, was very narrow at that point; the victorious whirlwind had driven forward, mingled and piled up the wreck of the breakwater in this narrow pass. The very violence of the assault, by heaping up the mass and driving the broken ends one into the other, had contributed to make the pile firm. It was destroyed, but immovable. A few pieces of timber only were swept away, and dispersed by the waves. One passed through the air very near to Gilliatt. He felt the counter-current upon his forehead.

Some waves, however, of that kind, which in great tempests return with an imperturbable regularity, swept over the ruins of the breakwater. They fell into the defile, and in spite of the many angles of the passage, set the waters within in commotion. The waters began to roll through the gorge ominously. The mysterious embraces of the waves among the rocks were audible.

What means were there of preventing this agita-

tion extending as far as the sloop? It would not require a long time for the blasts of wind to create a tempest through all the windings of the pass. A few heavy seas would be sufficient to stave in the sloop and scatter her burden.

Gilliatt shuddered as he reflected.

But he was not disconcerted. No defeat could daunt his soul.

The hurricane had now discovered the true plan of attack, and was rushing fiercely between the two walls of the strait.

Suddenly a crash was heard, resounding and prolonging itself through the defile at some distance behind him, — a crash more terrible than any he had yet heard.

It came from the direction of the sloop.

Something disastrous was happening there.

Gilliatt hastened towards it.

From the eastern gullet where he was he could not see the sloop on account of the sharp turns of the pass. At the last turn he stopped and waited for the lightning.

The first flash revealed to him the position of affairs.

The rush of the sea through the eastern entrance had been met by a blast of wind from the other end. A disaster was near at hand.

The sloop had received no visible damage; anchored as she was, the storm had little power over her, but the carcass of the Durande was distressed.

In such a tempest the wreck presented a considerable surface. It was entirely out of the sea, in the

air, exposed. The breach which Gilliatt had made, and through which he had passed the engine, had rendered the hull still weaker. The keelson was snapped, the vertebral column of the skeleton was broken.

The hurricane had passed over it. Scarcely more than this was needed to complete its destruction. The planking of the deck had bent like an opened book. The dismemberment had begun. It was the noise of this dislocation which had reached Gilliatt's ears in the midst of the tempest.

The disaster which presented itself as he approached appeared almost irremediable.

The square opening which he had cut in the keel had become a gaping wound. The wind had converted the smooth-cut hole into a ragged fracture. This transverse breach separated the wreck in two. The after-part, nearest to the sloop, had remained firm in its bed of rocks. The forward portion, which faced him, was hanging. A fracture, while it holds, is a sort of hinge. The whole mass oscillated, as the wind moved it, with a doleful noise. Fortunately, the sloop was no longer beneath it.

But this swinging movement shook the other portion of the hull, still wedged and immovable as it was between the two Douvres. From shaking to casting down, the distance is not far. Under the obstinate assaults of the gale, the dislocated part might suddenly carry away the other portion, which almost touched the sloop. In this case the whole wreck, together with the sloop and the engine, must be swept into the sea and swallowed up.

All this presented itself to his eyes. This catastrophe would be the final one. How could it be prevented?

Gilliatt was one of those who are accustomed to snatch the means of safety out of danger itself. He collected his ideas for a moment. Then he hastened to his arsenal and brought his hatchet.

The mallet had served him well; it was now the turn of the axe.

He mounted upon the wreck, got a footing on that part of the planking which had not given way, and leaning over the precipice of the pass between the Douvres, he began to cut away the broken joists and the planking which supported the hanging portion of the hull.

His object was to effect the separation of the two parts of the wreck, to disencumber the half which remained firm, to throw overboard what the waves had seized, and thus share the prey with the storm. The hanging portion of the wreck, borne down by the wind and by its own weight, adhered only at one or two points. The entire wreck resembled a folding screen, one leaf of which, half hanging, beat against the other. Five or six pieces of the planking only, bent and started, but not broken, still held. Their fractures creaked and enlarged at every gust, and the axe, so to speak, had but to help the labor of the wind. This more than half-severed condition, while it increased the facility of the work, also rendered it dangerous. The whole might give way beneath him at any moment.

The tempest had reached its highest point. The

convulsion of the sea reached the heavens. Hitherto the storm had been supreme; it had seemed to work its own imperious will, to give the impulse, to drive the waves to frenzy while still preserving a sort of sinister lucidity. Below was fury; above, anger. The heavens are the breath, the ocean only foam; hence the authority of the wind. But the intoxication of its own horrors had confused it. It had become a mere whirlwind; it was a blindness leading to night. There are times when tempests become frenzied, when the heavens are attacked with a sort of delirium, when the firmament raves and hurls its lightnings blindly. No terror is greater than this. It is a hideous moment. The trembling of the rock was at its height. Every storm has a mysterious course, but now it loses its appointed path. It is the most dangerous point of the tempest. "At that moment," says Thomas Fuller, "the wind is a furious maniac." It is at this instant that the continuous discharge of electricity takes place which Piddington calls "the cascade of lightnings." It is at this instant that in the blackest spot of the clouds — none know why, unless it be to spy the universal terror — a circle of blue light appears, which the Spanish sailors of ancient times called the eye of the tempest (*el ojo de la tempestad*). That terrible eye looked down upon Gilliatt.

Gilliatt, on his part, was surveying the heavens. He raised his head now. After every stroke of his hatchet he stood erect and gazed upwards almost haughtily. He was, or seemed to be, too near destruction not to feel self-sustained. Would he de-

spair? — No! In the presence of the wildest fury of the ocean he was watchful as well as bold. He planted his feet only where the wreck was firm. He ventured his life, and yet was careful; for his determined spirit, too, had reached its highest point. His strength had grown tenfold greater. He had become heated with his own intrepidity. The strokes of his hatchet were like blows of defiance. He seemed to have gained in directness what the tempest had lost. A pathetic struggle! On the one hand, an indefatigable will; on the other, inexhaustible power. It was a contest with the elements for the prize at his feet. The clouds took the shape of Gorgon masks in the immensity of the heavens; every possible form of terror appeared; the rain came from the sea, the surf from the cloud; phantoms of the wind bent down; meteoric faces revealed themselves and were again eclipsed, leaving the darkness more monstrous; then there was nothing seen but the torrents coming from all sides, — a boiling sea; cumuli, heavy with hail, ashen-hued, ragged-edged, appeared seized with a sort of whirling frenzy. A noise like the rattling of dried peas in a sieve filled the air; the inverse currents of electricity observed by Volta darted their sudden flashes from cloud to cloud. The prolongation of the lightnings was terrible; the flashes passed near to Gilliatt. The very ocean seemed astonished. He passed to and fro upon the tottering wreck, making the deck tremble under his steps, striking, cutting, hacking with the hatchet in his hand, pallid in the gleam of the lightning, his long hair streaming, his feet naked, in rags, his face covered with the

foam of the sea, but grand still amid that maelstrom of the thunder-storm.

Against this delirium of Nature's forces man has no weapon but his ingenuity. Ingenuity was Gilliatt's triumph. His object was to allow all the dislocated portions of the wreck to fall together. For this reason he cut away the broken portions without entirely separating them, leaving some parts on which they still swung. Suddenly he stopped, holding his axe in the air. The operation was complete. The entire portion was detached.

The mass rolled down between the two Douvres, just below Gilliatt, who stood upon the wreck, leaning over and observing the fall. It fell perpendicularly into the water, struck the rocks, and stopped in the defile before touching the bottom. Enough remained out of the water to rise more than twelve feet above the waves. The vertical mass of planking formed a wall between the two Douvres; like the rock overturned crosswise higher up the defile, it allowed only a slight stream of foam to pass through at its two extremities, and thus was a fifth barricade improvised by Gilliatt against the tempest in that passage of the seas.

The hurricane itself, in its blind fury, had assisted in the construction of this last barrier.

It was fortunate that the proximity of the two walls had prevented the mass of wreck from falling to the bottom. This circumstance gave the barricade greater height; the water, besides, could flow under the obstacle, which diminished the power of the waves. That which passes below cannot pass

over. This is partly the secret of the floating breakwater.

Henceforth, let the storm do what it might, there was nothing to fear for the sloop or the machinery. The water around them could not become agitated again. Between the barrier of the Douvres which covered them on the west, and the barricade which protected them from the east, no heavy sea or wind could reach them.

Gilliatt had plucked safety out of the catastrophe itself. The storm had been his fellow-laborer in the work.

This done, he took a little water in the palm of his hand from one of the rain-pools, and drank; and then, looking upward at the storm, said with a smile, "Bungler!"

Human intelligence combating with brute force experiences an ironical joy in demonstrating the stupidity of its antagonist, and compelling it to serve the very objects of its fury; and Gilliatt felt something of that immemorial desire to insult his invisible enemy, which is as old as the heroes of the Iliad.

He descended to the sloop and examined it by the gleam of the lightning. The relief which he had been able to give to his distressed boat was well-timed. She had been much shaken during the last hour, and had begun to give way. A hasty glance revealed no serious injury. Nevertheless he was certain that the vessel had been subjected to violent shocks. As soon as the waves had subsided, the hull had righted itself; the anchors had held fast;

as to the machine, the four chains had supported it admirably.

While Gilliatt was completing this survey, something white passed before his eyes and vanished in the gloom. It was a sea-mew.

No sight could be more welcome in tempestuous weather. When the birds reappear, the storm is departing. The thunder redoubled its force, — another good sign.

The violent efforts of the storm had broken its force. All mariners know that the last ordeal is severe, but short. The excessive violence of the thunder-storm is the herald of the end.

The rain stopped suddenly. Then there was only a surly rumbling in the heavens. The storm ceased with the suddenness of a plank falling to the ground. The immense mass of clouds became disorganized. A strip of clear sky appeared between them. Gilliatt was astonished; it was broad daylight.

The tempest had lasted nearly twenty hours.

The wind which had brought the storm carried it away. A dark pile was diffused over the horizon, the broken clouds were flying in confusion across the sky. From one end to the other of the line there was a movement of retreat: a long muttering was heard, gradually decreasing, a few last drops of rain fell, and all those dark masses charged with thunder departed like a terrible multitude of chariots.

Suddenly the wide expanse of sky became blue.

Gilliatt perceived that he was wearied. Sleep descends upon the exhausted frame like a bird upon

its prey. He drooped, and sank upon the deck of the boat without choosing his position, and there slept. Stretched at length and inert, he remained thus for some hours, scarcely distinguishable from the beams and joists among which he lay.

BOOK IV.

PITFALLS IN THE WAY.

CHAPTER I.

HE WHO IS HUNGRY IS NOT ALONE.

When he awakened he was hungry.

The sea was growing calmer. But there was still a heavy swell, which made his departure, for the present at least, impossible. The day, too, was far advanced. For the sloop with its burden to get to Guernsey before midnight, it was necessary to start in the morning.

Although pressed by hunger, Gilliatt began by stripping himself, the only means of getting warmth. His clothing was saturated by the storm, but the rain had washed out the sea-water, which rendered it possible to dry them.

He kept nothing on but his trousers, which he turned up nearly to the knees.

His shirt, overcoat, jacket, overalls, and sheepskin he spread out and fastened down with stones here and there.

Then he thought of eating.

He had recourse to his knife, which he was careful to sharpen, and to keep always in good condition;

and he detached from the rocks a few limpets, similar in kind to the *clonisses* of the Mediterranean. It is well known that these are eaten raw; but after so many labors, so various and so rude, the pittance was meagre. His biscuit was gone; but of water he had now abundance. There was more than enough to quench his thirst; he was swamped.

He took advantage of the receding tide to wander among the rocks in search of crayfish. There was extent enough of rock to hope for a successful search.

But he had not reflected that he could do nothing with these without fire to cook them. If he had taken the trouble to go to his store-cavern, he would have found it inundated with the rain. His wood and coal were drowned, and of his store of tow, which served him for tinder, there was not a fibre which was not saturated. No means remained of lighting a fire.

Moreover, his blower was completely disorganized; the screen of the hearth of his forge was broken down; the storm had sacked and devastated his workshop. With what tools and apparatus had escaped the general wreck he could still, if necessary, have done carpentry-work; but he could not have accomplished any of the labors of the smith. But Gilliatt at that moment was not thinking of his workshop.

Drawn in another direction by the pangs of hunger, he had pursued without much reflection his search for food. He wandered, not in the gorge of the

rocks, but outside among the smaller breakers. It was there that the Durande, ten weeks previously, had first struck upon the sunken reef.

For the search that Gilliatt was prosecuting, this part was more favorable than the interior. At low water the crabs are accustomed to crawl out into the air; and it is a curious sight to see them warm themselves in the sun, sometimes in such swarms that the disgusted loiterer, watching these creatures, with their awkward sidelong gait, climbing clumsily from crack to crack the lower stages of the rocks like the steps of a staircase, is compelled to believe that the sea has a sort of vermin of its own.

For two months Gilliatt had lived upon these vermin of the sea.

On this day, however, the crayfish and crabs were both wanting. The tempest had driven them into their solitary retreats, and they had not yet mustered courage to venture abroad. Gilliatt held his open knife in his hand, and from time to time scraped a cockle from under the bunches of sea-weed, which he ate while still walking.

He could not have been far from the very spot where Sieur Clubin had perished.

As Gilliatt was determining to content himself with the sea-urchins and the *châtaignes de mer*, a little clattering noise at his feet aroused his attention. A large crab, startled by his approach, had just dropped into a pool. The water was shallow, and he did not lose sight of it.

He chased the crab along the base of the rock: the crab moved fast.

Suddenly it was gone.

It had buried itself in some crevice under the rock.

Gilliatt clutched the projections of the rock, and stretched out to observe where it shelved away under the water.

As he suspected, there was an opening there, in which the creature had evidently taken refuge. It was more than a crevice; it was a kind of porch.

The sea entered beneath it, but was not deep. The bottom was visible, covered with large pebbles. The pebbles were green and clothed with *confervæ*, indicating that they were never dry. They were like the tops of a number of heads of infants covered with a kind of green hair.

Holding his knife between his teeth, Gilliatt descended by the help of feet and hands from the upper part of the escarpment, and leaped into the water. It reached almost to his shoulders.

He made his way through the porch, and found himself in a blind passage, with a roof in the form of a rude arch over his head. The walls were polished and slippery. The crab was nowhere visible. He gained his feet and advanced in daylight growing fainter, so that he began to lose the power to distinguish objects.

At about fifteen paces the vaulted roof ended overhead. He had penetrated beyond the blind passage. There was here more space, and consequently more daylight. The pupils of his eyes, moreover, had dilated; he could see pretty clearly. He was taken by surprise.

He had made his way again into the singular cavern which he had visited in the previous month. The only difference was that he had entered by the way of the sea.

It was through the submarine arch which he had remarked before that he had just entered. At certain low tides it was accessible.

His eyes became more accustomed to the place; his vision became clearer and clearer; he was astonished. He found himself again in that extraordinary palace of shadows; saw again before his eyes that vaulted roof, those columns, those purple and blood-like stains, that vegetation rich with gems, and at the farther end that crypt or sanctuary and that altar-like stone. He took little notice of these details, but their impression was in his mind, and he saw that the place was unchanged.

He observed before him, at a certain height in the wall, the crevice through which he had penetrated the first time, and which from the point where he now stood appeared inaccessible.

Near the moulded arch he remarked those low dark grottos — a sort of caves within the cavern — which he had already observed from a distance. He now stood nearer to them. The entrance to the nearest to him was out of the water, and easily approachable. Nearer still than this recess he noticed, above the level of the water, and within reach of his hand, a horizontal fissure. It seemed to him probable that the crab had taken refuge there, and he plunged his hand in as far as he was able, and groped about in that dusky aperture.

Suddenly he felt himself seized by the arm. A strange indescribable horror thrilled through him.

Some living thing, thin, rough, flat, cold, slimy, had twisted itself round his naked arm in the dark depth below. It crept upward towards his chest. Its pressure was like a tightening cord, its steady persistence like that of a screw. In less than a moment some mysterious spiral form had passed round his wrist and elbow, and had reached his shoulder. A sharp point penetrated beneath the armpit.

Gilliatt recoiled, but he had scarcely power to move. He was, as it were, nailed to the place. With his left hand, which was disengaged, he seized his knife, which he still held between his teeth, and with that hand, holding the knife, he supported himself against the rocks, while he made a desperate effort to withdraw his arm. He succeeded only in disturbing his persecutor, which wound itself still tighter. It was supple as leather, strong as steel, cold as night.

A second form, sharp, elongated, and narrow, issued out of the crevice, like a tongue out of monstrous jaws. It seemed to lick his naked body. Then suddenly stretching out it became longer and thinner as it crept over his skin and wound itself round him. At the same time a terrible sense of pain, comparable to nothing he had ever known, compelled all his muscles to contract. He felt upon his skin a number of flat rounded points. It seemed as if innumerable suckers had fastened to his flesh and were about to drink his blood.

A third long undulating shape issued from the hole in the rock, seemed to feel its way about his body, lashed round his ribs like a cord, and fixed itself there.

Agony when at its height is mute. Gilliatt uttered no cry. There was sufficient light for him to see the repulsive forms which had entangled themselves about him. A fourth ligature, but this one swift as an arrow, darted towards his stomach and wound around him there.

It was impossible to sever or tear away the slimy bands which were twisted tightly round his body, and were adhering by a number of points. Each of the points was the focus of frightful and singular pangs. It was as if numberless small mouths were devouring him at the same time.

A fifth long, slimy, ribbon-shaped strip issued from the hole. It passed over the others, and wound itself tightly around his chest. The compression increased his sufferings. He could scarcely breathe.

These living thongs were pointed at their extremities, but broadened like the blade of a sword towards its hilt. All belonged evidently to the same centre. They crept and glided about him; he felt the strange points of pressure, which seemed to him like mouths, change their places from time to time.

Suddenly a large, round, flattened, glutinous mass issued from beneath the crevice. It was the centre; the five thongs were attached to it like spokes to the hub of a wheel. On the opposite side of this dis-

gusting monster appeared the commencement of three other tentacles, the ends of which remained under the rock. In the middle of this slimy mass appeared two eyes.

The eyes were fixed on Gilliatt.

He recognized the devil-fish.

CHAPTER II.

THE MONSTER.

It is difficult for those who have not seen it to believe in the existence of the devil-fish. Compared to this creature, the ancient hydras are insignificant.

At times we are tempted to imagine that the vague forms which float in our dreams may encounter in the realm of the Possible attractive forces, having power to fix their lineaments, and shape living beings, out of these creatures of our slumbers. The Unknown has power over these strange visions, and out of them composes monsters. Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod imagined only the Chimera: God has created the devil-fish.

The Divine Will sometimes excels in monstrous forms of life. The wherefore of this perplexes and affrights the religious thinker.

If terror were the object of its creation, nothing could be imagined more ideally perfect than the devil-fish.

The whale has enormous bulk, the devil-fish is comparatively small; the hippopotamus has its cuirass, the devil-fish is destitute of one; the jararaca makes a hissing noise, the devil-fish is mute; the rhinoceros has a horn, the devil-fish has none; the

scorpion has a dart, the devil-fish has no dart; the *buthus* has claws, the devil-fish has none; the monkey has a prehensile tail, the devil-fish has no tail; the shark has sharp fins, the devil-fish has no fins; the vespertilio-bat has wings with claws, the devil-fish has no wings; the porcupine has his spines, the devil-fish has no spines; the sword-fish has his sword, the devil-fish has none; the torpedo has its electric spark, the devil-fish has none; the toad has its poison, the devil-fish has none; the viper has its venom, the devil-fish has no venom; the lion has its claws, the devil-fish has no claws; the griffon has its beak, the devil-fish has no beak; the crocodile has its jaws, the devil-fish has no teeth.

The devil-fish has no muscular organization, no menacing cry, no breastplate, no horn, no dart, no claw, no tail with which to hold or bruise, no cutting fins, no wings with nails, no prickles, no sword, no electric discharge, no poison, no talons, no beak, no teeth, — yet he is of all creatures the most formidably armed.

What then is the devil-fish? It is the sea vampire.

The swimmer who, attracted by the beauty of the spot, ventures among breakers in the open sea, where the still waters hide the splendors of the deep, or in the hollows of unfrequented rocks, in unknown caverns abounding in sea plants, testacea, and crustacea, under the deep portals of the ocean, runs the risk of meeting it. If that fate should be yours, be not curious, but fly. The intruder enters there dazzled, but quits the spot in terror.

This frightful apparition, which is always possible among the rocks in the open sea, is a grayish form which undulates in the water. It is of the thickness of a man's arm, and in length nearly five feet. Its outline is ragged. Its form resembles an umbrella closed, and without handle. This irregular mass advances slowly towards you. Suddenly it opens, and eight radii issue abruptly from around a face with two eyes. These radii are alive: their undulation is like lambent flames; they resemble, when opened, the spokes of a wheel of four or five feet in diameter, — a terrible expansion! It springs upon its prey.

The devil-fish lassoes its victim.

It winds around the sufferer, covering and entangling him in its long folds. Underneath it is yellow; above, of a dull, earthy hue: nothing could render that inexplicable shade dust-colored; from its color, this dweller of the sea might have been made of ashes. Its form is spider-like, but its tints are like those of the chameleon. When irritated it becomes violet. Its most horrible characteristic is its softness.

Its folds strangle, its contact paralyzes.

It has an aspect like gangrened or scabrous flesh. It is a monstrous embodiment of disease.

It adheres closely to its prey, and cannot be torn away, — a fact which is due to its power of exhausting air. The eight antennæ, large at their roots, diminish gradually, and end in needle-like points. Underneath each of these feelers range two rows of pustules, decreasing in size, the largest ones near the

head, the smaller at the extremities. Each row contains twenty-five of these. There are, therefore, fifty pustules to each feeler, and the creature possesses in the whole four hundred. These pustules are capable of acting like cupping-glasses. They are cartilaginous substances, cylindrical, horny, and livid. Upon the large species they diminish gradually from the diameter of a five-franc piece to the size of a split pea. These small tubes can be thrust out and withdrawn by the animal at will. They are capable of piercing to a depth of more than an inch.

This sucking apparatus has all the regularity and delicacy of a key-board. It stands forth at one moment and disappears the next. The most perfect sensitiveness cannot equal the contractibility of these suckers, always proportioned to the internal movement of the animal, and its exterior circumstances. The monster is endowed with the qualities of the sensitive-plant.

This animal is the same as those which mariners call polyps; which science designates a cephalopod, and which ancient legends call krakens. It is the English sailors who call them devil-fish, and sometimes bloodsuckers. In the Channel Islands they are called *pieuvres*.

They are rare at Guernsey, very small at Jersey, but near the island of Sark are numerous as well as very large.

An engraving in Sonnini's edition of Buffon represents a cephalopod crushing a frigate. Denis Montfort, in fact, considers the polyp, or octopod, of high latitudes strong enough to destroy a ship. Bory

Saint-Vincent doubts this; but he shows that in our regions they will attack men. Near Brecq-Hou, in Sark, they show a cave where a devil-fish a few years since seized and drowned a lobster-fisher. Peron and Lamarck are wrong in their belief that the polyp, having no fins, cannot swim. The writer of these lines has seen with his own eyes, at Sark, in the cavern called the Boutiques, a devil-fish swimming and pursuing a bather. When captured and killed, this specimen was found to be four English feet broad, and it was possible to count its four hundred suckers. The monster thrust them out convulsively in the agony of death.

According to Denis Montfort, one of those observers whose marvellous intuition sinks or raises them to the level of magicians, the polyp is almost endowed with the passions of man: it has its hatreds. In fact, in the absolute, to be hideous is to hate.

Hideousness writhes under the power of the natural law of elimination, which necessarily renders it hostile.

When swimming, the devil-fish rests, so to speak, in its sheath. It swims with all its parts drawn close. It may be likened to a sleeve sewn up, with a closed first within. The protuberance, which is the head, pushes the water aside and advances with a vague undulatory movement. Its two eyes, though large, are indistinct, being of the color of the water.

When in ambush, or seeking its prey, it retires into itself, grows smaller and condenses itself. It is then scarcely distinguishable in the submarine twilight.

At such times it looks like a mere ripple in the water. It resembles anything except a living creature.

The devil-fish is crafty. When its victim is unsuspicious, it opens suddenly.

A glutinous mass, endowed with a malignant will, what can be more horrible?

It is in the most beautiful azure depths of the limpid water that this hideous, voracious polyp delights. It always conceals itself, a fact which increases its terrible associations. When it is seen, it is almost invariably after it has been captured.

At night, however, and particularly in the hot season, it becomes phosphorescent. This horrible creature has its passions, its submarine nuptials. Then it adorns itself, burns and illumines; and from the height of some rock it may be seen in the deep obscurity of the waves below, expanding with a pale irradiation, — a spectral sun.

The devil-fish not only swims, it walks. It is partly fish, partly reptile. It crawls upon the bed of the sea. At these times it makes use of its eight feelers, and creeps along like a swift-moving caterpillar.

It has no blood, no bones, no flesh. It is soft and flabby, — a skin with nothing inside. Its eight tentacles may be turned inside-out, like the fingers of a glove.

It has a single orifice in the centre of its radii, which appears at first to be neither the anus nor the mouth. It is, in fact, both one and the other. The orifice performs a double function. The entire creature is cold.

The jelly-fish of the Mediterranean is repulsive. Contact with that animated gelatinous substance which envelopes the bather, in which the hands sink and the nails scratch ineffectively; which can be torn without killing it, and which can be plucked off without entirely removing it; that fluid and yet tenacious creature which slips through the fingers is disgusting; but no horror can equal the sudden apparition of the devil-fish, — that Medusa with its eight serpents.

No grasp is like the sudden strain of the cephalopod.

It is with the sucking apparatus that it attacks. The victim is oppressed by a vacuum drawing at numberless points; it is not a clawing or a biting, but an indescribable scarification. A tearing of the flesh is terrible, but less terrible than a sucking of the blood. Claws are harmless compared with the horrible action of these natural air-cups. The talons of the wild beast enter into your flesh; but with the cephalopod it is you who enter into the creature. The muscles swell, the fibres of the body are contorted, the skin cracks under the loathsome oppression, the blood spurts out and mingles horribly with the lymph of the monster, which clings to its victim by innumerable hideous mouths. The hydra incorporates itself with the man; the man becomes one with the hydra. The spectre lies upon you: the tiger can only devour you; the devil-fish, horrible, sucks your life-blood away. He draws you to him and into himself; while bound down, glued to the ground, powerless, you feel yourself gradually emptied into this horrible pouch, which is the monster itself.

These strange animals Science, in accordance with her habit of excessive caution even in the face of facts, at first rejects as fabulous; then she decides to observe them; then she dissects, classifies, catalogues, and labels; then procures specimens, and exhibits them in glass cases in museums. They enter then into her nomenclature; are designated mollusks, invertebrata, radiata; she determines their position in the animal world, — a little above the calamaries, a little below the sepiadæ; she finds for these hydras of the sea an analogous creature in fresh water called the argyronecte; she divides them into great, medium, and small kinds; she admits more readily the existence of the small than of the large species, which is, however, the tendency of science in all countries, for she is by nature more microscopic than telescopic; she regards them from the point of view of their construction, and calls them cephalopods, counts their antennæ, and calls them octopedes; this done, she leaves them. Where Science drops them Philosophy takes them up.

Philosophy in her turn studies these creatures; she goes both less far and farther; she does not dissect, but she meditates; where the scalpel has labored she plunges the hypothesis; she seeks the final cause, — eternal perplexity of the thinker! These creatures disturb his ideas of the Creator. They are hideous surprises; they are the death's-head at the feast of contemplation. The philosopher determines their characteristics in dread. They are the concrete forms of evil. What attitude can he take towards this blasphemy of creation against herself? To whom

can he look for the solution of these riddles? The Possible is a terrible matrix. Monsters are mysteries in their concrete form. Portions of shade issue from the mass, and something within detaches itself, rolls, floats, condenses, borrows elements from the ambient darkness, becomes subject to unknown polarizations, assumes a kind of life, furnishes itself with some unimagined form from the obscurity, and with some terrible spirit from the miasma, and wanders ghost-like among living things. It is as if night itself assumed the form of animals. But for what good; with what object? Thus we come again to the eternal questioning.

These animals are indeed phantoms as much as monsters; they are proved and yet improbable; their fate is to exist in spite of *à priori* reasonings. They are the amphibians of the shore that separates life from death. Their unreality makes their existence puzzling. They touch the frontier of man's domain and people the region of chimeras. We deny the possibility of the vampire, and the devil-fish appears. Their swarming is a certainty which disconcerts our confidence. Optimism, which is nevertheless in the right, becomes silenced in their presence. They form the visible extremity of the dark circles; they mark the transition of our reality into another; they seem to belong to that beginning of terrible life which the dreamer sees confusedly through the loophole of the night.

That multiplication of monsters, first in the Invisible, then in the Possible, has been suspected, perhaps perceived, by magi and philosophers in their

austere ecstasies and profound contemplations. Hence the conjecture of a material hell. The demon is simply the invisible tiger. The wild beast which devours souls has been presented to the eyes of human beings by Saint John, and by Dante in his vision of Hell.

If in truth the invisible circles of creation continue indefinitely, if after one there is yet another, and so forth in illimitable progression,—if that chain, which for our part we are resolved to doubt, really exist, the devil-fish at one extremity proves Satan at the other. It is certain that the wrong-doer at one end proves the existence of wrong at the other.

Every malignant creature, like every perverted intelligence, is a sphinx, — a terrible sphinx propounding a terrible riddle, the riddle of the existence of evil.

It is this perfection of evil which has sometimes sufficed to incline powerful intellects to a faith in the duality of the Deity, towards that terrible bifrons of the Manichæans.

A piece of silk stolen during the last war from the palace of the Emperor of China represents a shark eating a crocodile, which is eating a serpent, which is devouring an eagle, which is preying on a swallow, which in his turn is eating a caterpillar.

All Nature which is under our observation is thus alternately devouring and devoured. The prey prey on each other.

Learned men, however, who are also philosophers, and therefore optimists in their view of creation, find, or believe they find, an explanation. Among

others, Bonnet of Geneva, that mysterious exact thinker, who was opposed to Buffon, as in later times Geoffroy St. Hilaire has been to Cuvier, was struck with the idea of the final object. His notions may be summed up thus: universal death necessitates universal sepulture; the devourers are the sextons of the system of Nature. All created things enter into and form the elements of others. To perish is to nourish. Such is the terrible law, from which not even man himself escapes.

In our world of twilight this fatal order of things produces monsters. You ask, for what purpose? We find the solution here.

But is this the solution? Is this the answer to our questionings? And if so, why not some different order of things? Thus the question returns.

Let us live; be it so.

But let us endeavor that death shall be progress. Let us aspire to an existence in which these mysteries shall be made clear. Let us follow that conscience which leads us thither.

For let us never forget that the highest is only attained through the high.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER KIND OF SEA COMBAT.

SUCH was the creature into whose power Gilliatt had fallen for some minutes.

The monster was the inhabitant of the grotto, the terrible genius of the place, — a kind of sombre demon of the water.

All the splendors of the cavern existed for it alone.

On the day of the previous month when Gilliatt had first penetrated into the grotto, the dark outline vaguely perceived by him in the ripples of the secret waters was this monster. It was here in its home.

When, entering for the second time into the cavern in pursuit of the crab, he had observed the crevice in which he supposed that the crab had taken refuge, the devil-fish was there lying in wait for prey.

Is it possible to imagine that secret ambush?

No bird would brood, no egg would burst to life, no flower would dare to open, no breast to give milk, no heart to love, no spirit to soar, under the influence of that apparition of evil watching with sinister patience in the dusk.

Gilliatt had thrust his arm deep into the opening; the monster had snapped at it. It held him fast, as the spider holds the fly.

He was in the water up to his belt, his naked feet clutching the slippery roundness of the huge stones at the bottom, his right arm bound and rendered powerless by the flat coils of the long tentacles of the creature, and his body almost hidden under the folds and cross-folds of this horrible bandage.

Of the eight arms of the devil-fish, three adhered to the rock, while five encircled Gilliatt. In this way, clinging to the granite on the one hand, and with the other to its human prey, it enchained him to the rock. Two hundred and fifty suckers were upon him, tormenting him with agony and loathing. He was grasped by gigantic hands, the fingers of which were each nearly a yard long, and furnished inside with living blisters eating into the flesh.

As we have said, it is impossible to tear oneself from the folds of the devil-fish. The attempt ends only in a firmer grasp. The monster clings with more determined force. Its effort increases with that of its victim; every struggle produces a tightening of its ligatures.

Gilliatt had but one resource, — his knife.

His left hand only was free, but the reader knows with what power he could use it. It might have been said that he had two right hands.

His open knife was in his hand.

The antennæ of the devil-fish cannot be cut; they form a leathery substance, impossible to divide with the knife; it slips under the edge; its position in attack also is such that to cut it would be to wound the victim's own flesh.

The creature is formidable, but there is a way of

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resisting it. The fishermen of Sark know this, as does any one who has seen them executé certain abrupt movements in the sea. The porpoises know it also. They have a way of biting the cuttle-fish which decapitates it. Hence the frequent sight on the sea of pen-fish, polyps, and cuttle-fish without heads.

The polyp, in fact, is only vulnerable through the head.

Gilliatt was not ignorant of this fact.

He had never seen a devil-fish of this size. His first encounter was with one of the larger species. Another would have been powerless with terror.

With the devil-fish, as with a furious bull, there is a certain moment in the conflict which must be seized. It is the instant when the bull lowers the neck; it is the instant when the devil-fish advances its head. The movement is rapid. He who loses that moment is destroyed.

The things we have described occupied only a few moments. Gilliatt, however, felt the increasing power of two hundred and fifty suckers.

The monster is cunning; it tries first to stupefy its prey. It seizes and then pauses awhile.

Gilliatt grasped his knife; the sucking increased.

He looked at the monster, which seemed to look at him.

Suddenly it loosened from the rock its sixth antenna, and darting it at him, seized him by the left arm.

At the same moment it advanced its head with a violent movement. In one second more its mouth

would have fastened on his breast. Bleeding in the sides, and with his two arms entangled, he would have been a dead man.

But Gilliatt was watchful. He avoided the antenna, and at the moment when the monster darted forward to fasten on his breast, he struck it with the knife clenched in his left hand. There were two convulsions in opposite directions: that of the devil-fish and that of its prey. The movement was rapid as a double flash of lightnings.

He had plunged the blade of his knife into the flat slimy substance, and by a rapid movement, like the flourish of a whip in the air, describing a circle round the two eyes, he wrenched the head off as a man would draw a tooth.

The struggle was ended. The folds relaxed. The monster dropped away, like the slow detaching of bands. The four hundred suckers, deprived of their sustaining power, dropped at once from the man and the rock. The mass sank to the bottom of the water.

Breathless with the struggle, Gilliatt could perceive upon the stones at his feet two shapeless, slimy heaps, the head on one side, the remains of the monster on the other, — for it could not be called a body.

Fearing, nevertheless, some convulsive return of his agony, he recoiled to avoid the reach of the dreaded tentacles.

But the monster was quite dead.

Gilliatt closed his knife.

CHAPTER IV.

NOTHING IS HIDDEN; NOTHING LOST.

It was time that he should kill the devil-fish. He was almost suffocated. His right arm and his chest were purple. Numberless little swellings were distinguishable upon them; the blood flowed from them here and there. The remedy for these wounds is sea-water. Gilliatt plunged into it; rubbing himself at the same time with the palms of his hands. The swellings disappeared under the friction.

By stepping farther into the waters he had, without perceiving it, approached to the species of recess already observed by him near the crevice where he had been lassoed by the devil-fish.

This recess stretched obliquely under the great walls of the cavern, and was dry. The large pebbles which had become heaped up there had raised the bottom above the level of ordinary tides. The entrance was a rather large elliptical arch; a man could enter by stooping. The green light of the submarine grotto penetrated into it and lighted it feebly.

It happened that, while hastily rubbing his skin, Gilliatt raised his eyes mechanically.

He was able to see far into the cavern.

He shuddered.

He fancied that he perceived, in the farthest depth of the dusky recess, something smiling.

Gilliatt had never heard the word "hallucination," but he was familiar with the idea. Those mysterious encounters with the invisible, which, for the sake of avoiding the difficulty of explaining them, we call hallucinations, are in Nature. Illusions or realities, visions are a fact. He who has the gift will see them. Gilliatt, as we have said, was a dreamer. He had at times the faculty of a seer. It was not in vain that he had spent his days in musing among solitary places.

He imagined himself the dupe of one of those mirages which he had more than once beheld when in his dreamy moods.

The opening was somewhat in the shape of a chalk-burner's oven. It was a low niche with projections like basket-handles. Its abrupt groins contracted gradually as far as the extremity of the crypt, where the heaps of round stones and the rocky roof joined.

Gilliatt entered, and lowering his head, advanced towards the object in the distance.

There was indeed something smiling.

It was a death's-head, but it was not only the head. There was the entire skeleton. A complete human skeleton was lying in the cavern.

In such a position a bold man will continue his researches.

Gilliatt cast his eyes around. He was surrounded by a multitude of crabs. The multitude did not stir. They were but empty shells.

These groups were scattered here and there among the masses of pebbles, in irregular constellations.

Gilliatt, having his eyes fixed elsewhere, had walked among them without perceiving them.

At the extremity of the crypt, where he had now penetrated, there was a still greater heap of remains. It was a confused mass of legs, antennæ, and mandibles. Claws stood wide open; bony shells lay still under their bristling prickles; some, reversed, showed their livid hollows. The heap was like a mêlée of besiegers who had fallen and lay massed together, or a tangled heap of brushwood.

The skeleton was partly buried in this heap.

Under this confused mass of scales and tentacles the eye perceived the cranium with its furrows, the vertebræ, the thigh-bones, the tibias, and the long-jointed finger-bones with their nails. The frame of the ribs was filled with crabs. Some heart had once beat there. The green mould of the sea had settled round the sockets of the eyes. Limpets had left their slime upon the bony nostrils. For the rest, there were not in this cave within the rocks either sea-gulls, or weeds, or a breath of air. All was still. The teeth grinned.

The sombre side of laughter is that strange mockery of its expression which is peculiar to a human skull.

This marvellous palace of the deep, inlaid and incrusted with all the gems of the sea, had at length revealed and told its secret. It was a savage haunt; the devil-fish inhabited it; it was also a tomb, in which the body of a man reposed.

The skeleton and the creatures around it oscillated vaguely in the reflections of the subterranean water which trembled upon the roof and wall. The horrible multitude of crabs looked as if finishing their repast. These crustacea seemed to be devouring the carcass. Nothing could be more strange than the aspect of the dead vermin upon their dead prey, — the awful sight of death feeding upon death.

Gilliatt had beneath his eyes the storehouse of the devil-fish.

It was a dismal sight. The crabs had devoured the man; the devil-fish had devoured the crabs.

There were no remains of clothing anywhere visible. The man must have been seized naked.

Gilliatt, attentively examining, began to remove the shells from the skeleton. What had this man been? The body was admirably dissected; it looked as if prepared for the study of its anatomy; all the flesh was stripped, — not a muscle remained, not a bone was missing. If Gilliatt had been learned in science, he might have demonstrated the fact. The periostea, denuded of their covering, were white and smooth, as if they had been polished; but for some green mould of sea-mosses here and there, they would have been like ivory. The cartilaginous divisions were delicately inlaid and arranged. The tomb sometimes produces this dismal mosaic work.

The body was, as it were, interred under the heap of dead crabs. Gilliatt disinterred it.

Suddenly he stooped and examined more closely.

He had perceived around the vertebral column a sort of belt.

It was a leathern girdle, which had evidently been worn buckled upon the waist of the man when alive.

The leather was moist, the buckle rusty.

Gilliatt pulled the girdle; the vertebræ of the skeleton resisted, and he was compelled to break through them in order to remove it. A crust of small shells had begun to form upon it.

He felt it, and found a hard substance within, apparently of square form. It was useless to endeavor to unfasten the buckle, so he cut the leather with his knife.

The girdle contained a little iron box and some pieces of gold. Gilliatt counted twenty guineas.

The iron box was an old sailor's tobacco-box, opening and shutting with a spring. It was very tight and rusty; the spring, being completely oxidized, would not work.

Once more the knife served Gilliatt in a difficulty. A pressure with the point of the blade caused the lid to fly up.

The box was open.

There was nothing inside but pieces of paper.

A little roll of very thin sheets, folded in four, was fitted in the bottom of the box. They were damp, but not injured. The box, hermetically sealed, had preserved them. Gilliatt unfolded them.

They were three bank-notes of one thousand pounds sterling each,—making together seventy-five thousand francs.

Gilliatt folded them again, replaced them in the box, taking advantage of the space which remained

to add the twenty guineas, and then reclosed the box as well as he could.

Next he examined the girdle.

The leather, which had originally been polished outside, was rough within. Upon this tawny ground some letters had been traced in black thick ink. He deciphered them, and read the words, "Sieur Clubin."

CHAPTER V.

THE FATAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIX INCHES AND TWO FEET.

GILLIATT replaced the box in the girdle, and placed the girdle in the pocket of his trousers.

He left the skeleton among the crabs, with the remains of the devil-fish beside it.

While he had been occupied with the devil-fish and the skeleton the rising tide had submerged the entrance to the cave. He was only enabled to leave it by plunging under the arched entrance. He got through without difficulty; for he knew the entrance well, and was master of these gymnastics in the sea.

It is easy to understand the drama which had taken place there during the ten weeks preceding. One monster had preyed upon another, — the devil-fish had seized Clubin.

These two embodiments of treachery had met in the inexorable darkness. There had been an encounter at the bottom of the sea between these two compounds of mystery and watchfulness; the monster had destroyed the man, — a horrible fulfilment of justice.

The crab feeds on carrion, the devil-fish on crabs. The devil-fish seizes as it passes any swimming ani-

mal, — an otter, a dog, a man if it can, — sucks the blood, and leaves the body at the bottom of the water. The crabs are the spider-formed scavengers of the sea. Putrefying flesh attracts them; they crowd round it, devour the body, and are in their turn consumed by the devil-fish. Dead creatures disappear in the crab; the crab disappears in the devil-fish. This is the law which we have already pointed out.

The devil-fish had laid hold of him and drowned him. Some wave had carried his body into the cave, and deposited it at the extremity of the inner cavern, where Gilliatt had discovered it.

He returned searching among the rocks for sea-urchins and limpets. He had no desire for crabs; to have eaten them now would have seemed to him like feeding upon human flesh.

For the rest, he thought of nothing but of eating what he could before starting. Nothing now interposed to prevent his departure. Great tempests are always followed by a calm, which sometimes lasts several days. There was therefore no danger from the sea. Gilliatt had resolved to leave the rocks on the following day. It was important, on account of the tide, to keep the barrier between the two Douvres during the night; but he intended to remove it at daybreak, to push the sloop out to sea, and set sail for St. Sampson. The light breeze which was blowing came from the southwest, which was precisely the wind he would want.

It was in the first quarter of the moon, in the month of May; the days were long.

When Gilliatt, having finished his wanderings among the rocks, and appeased his appetite to some extent, returned to the passage between the two Douvres, where he had left the sloop, the sun had set, the twilight was increased by that pale light which comes from a crescent moon, the tide had attained its height and was beginning to ebb. The funnel, standing upright above the sloop, had been covered by the foam during the tempest with a coating of salt which glittered white in the light of the moon.

This circumstance reminded Gilliatt that the storm had inundated the sloop both with surf and rain-water, and that if he meant to start in the morning it would be necessary to bail it out.

Before leaving to go in quest of crabs, he had ascertained that it had about six inches of water in the hold. The scoop which he used for the purpose would, he thought, be sufficient for throwing the water overboard.

On arriving at the barrier, Gilliatt was struck with terror. There were nearly two feet of water in the sloop. A terrible discovery, — the boat had sprung a leak.

She had been making water gradually during his absence. Burdened as she was, two feet of water was a perilous addition. A little more, and she must inevitably founder. If he had returned but an hour later, he would probably have found nothing above water but the funnel and the mast.

There was not a minute to be lost in deliberation. It was absolutely necessary to find the leakage, stop

it, and then empty the vessel or at all events, lighten it. The pumps of the Durande had been lost in the break-up of the wreck. He was reduced to using the scoop of the boat.

To find the leak was the most urgent necessity.

Gilliatt set to work immediately, and without even giving himself time to dress. He shivered; but he no longer felt either hunger or cold.

The water continued to gain upon his vessel. Fortunately there was no wind. The slightest swell would have been fatal.

The moon went down.

Bent low, and plunged in the water deeper than his waist, he groped about for a long time. He discovered the mischief at last.

During the gale, at the critical moment when the sloop had swerved, the strong boat had bumped and grazed rather violently on the rocks. One of the projections of the Little Douvre had made a fracture in the starboard side of the hull.

The leak unluckily — it might almost have been said, maliciously — had been made near the joint of the two riders; a fact which, joined with the fury of the hurricane, had prevented his perceiving it during his dark and rapid survey in the height of the storm.

The fracture was alarming on account of its size; but fortunately, although the vessel was sunk lower than usual by the weight of water, it was still above the ordinary water-line.

At the moment when the accident had occurred, the waves had rolled heavily into the defile, and had

flooded through the breach; and the vessel had sunk a few inches under the additional weight, so that, even after the subsidence of the water, the weight having raised the water-line, had kept the hole still under the surface. Hence the imminence of the danger. But if he could succeed in stopping the leak, he could empty the sloop; the hole once stanched, the vessel would rise to its usual water-line, the fracture would be above water, and in this position the repair would be easy, or at least possible. He had still, as we have already said, his carpenters' tools in good condition.

But meanwhile what uncertainty must he not endure! what perils, what chances of accidents! He heard the water rising inexorably. One shock, and all would have perished. What misery seemed in store for him! Perhaps his endeavors were even now too late.

He reproached himself bitterly. He thought that he ought to have seen the damage immediately. The six inches of water in the hold ought to have suggested it to him. He had been stupid enough to attribute these six inches of water to the rain and the foam. He was angry with himself for having slept and eaten; he taxed himself even with his weariness, and almost with the storm and the dark night. All seemed to him to have been his own fault.

These bitter self-reproaches filled his mind while engaged in his labor, but they did not prevent his considering well the work he was engaged in.

The leak had been found; that was the first step:

to stanch it was the second. That was all that was possible for the moment. Joinery work cannot be carried on under water.

It was a favorable circumstance that the breach in the hull was in the space between the two chains which held the funnel fast on the starboard side. The stuffing with which it was necessary to stop it could be fixed to these chains.

The water meanwhile was gaining. Its depth was now between two and three feet, and it reached above his knees.

CHAPTER VI.

DE PROFUNDIS AD ALTUM.

GILLIATT had to his hand among his reserve of rigging for the sloop a pretty large tarpaulin, furnished with long lanyards at the four corners.

He took this tarpaulin, made fast the two corners by the lanyards to the two rings of the chains of the funnel on the same side as the leak, and threw it over the gunwale. The tarpaulin hung like a sheet between the Little Douvre and the boat, and sunk in the water. The pressure of the water endeavoring to enter into the hold kept it close to the hull upon the gap. The heavier the pressure, the closer the sail adhered. It was stuck by the water itself right upon the fracture. The wound of the boat was stanched.

The tarred canvas formed an effectual barrier between the interior of the hold and the waves without. Not a drop of water entered. The leak was masked, but was not stopped. It was only a respite.

Gilliatt took the scoop and began to bail the sloop. It was time to lighten her. The labor warmed him a little, but his weariness was extreme. He was forced to acknowledge to himself that he could not complete the work of emptying the hold.

He had scarcely eaten anything, and he had the humiliation of feeling himself exhausted.

He measured the progress of his work by the sinking of the level of water below his knees. The fall was slow.

Moreover, the leakage was only interrupted; the evil was moderated, not repaired. The tarpaulin pushed into the gap began to bulge inside, looking as if a fist were under the canvas endeavoring to force it through. The canvas, strong and pitchy, resisted, but the swelling and the tension increased; it was not certain that it would not give way, and at any moment the swelling might become a rent. The irruption of water must then begin again.

In such a case, as the crews of vessels in distress know well, there is no other remedy than stuffing. The sailors take rags of every kind which they can find at hand, — everything, in fact, which in their language is called "service," — and with this they push the bulging sail-cloth as far as they can into the leak.

Of this "service" Gilliatt had none. All the rags and tow which he had stored up had been used in his operations or carried away by the storm.

If necessary, he might possibly have been able to find some remains by searching among the rocks. The sloop was sufficiently lightened for him to leave it with safety for a quarter of an hour; but how could he make this search without a light? The darkness was complete. There was no longer any moon, — nothing but the dim, starry sky. He had no dry tow with which to make a match, no tallow

to make a candle, no fire to light one, no lantern to shelter it from the wind. In the sloop and among the rocks all was confused and indistinct. He could hear the water lapping against the wounded hull, but he could not even see the crack. It was with his hands that he had ascertained the bulging of the tarpaulin. In that darkness it was impossible to make any useful search for rags of canvas or pieces of tow scattered among the breakers. Who could glean these waifs and strays without being able to see his path? Gilliatt looked sorrowfully at the sky. "All those stars," he thought, "and yet no light!"

The water in the bark having diminished, the pressure from without increased. The bulging of the canvas became larger, and was still increasing, like a frightful abscess ready to burst. The situation, which had been improved for a short time, began to be threatening.

Some means of effectually stopping it was absolutely necessary. He had nothing left but his clothes; these, it will be remembered, he had stretched to dry upon the projecting rocks of the Little Douvre.

He hastened to fetch them, and placed them upon the gunwale of the sloop.

Then he took his tarpaulin overcoat, and kneeling in the water, thrust it into the crevice, and pushing the swelling of the sail outward, emptied it of water. To the tarpaulin coat he added the sheepskin, then his Guernsey shirt, and then his jacket. The hole received them all. He had nothing left but his sailor's trousers, which he took off and pushed in

with the other articles. This enlarged and strengthened the stuffing. The stopper was made, and it appeared to be sufficient.

These clothes passed partly through the gap, the sail-cloth outside enveloping them. The sea, making an effort to enter, pressed against the obstacle, spread it over the gap, and blocked it. It was a sort of exterior compression.

Inside, the centre only of the bulging having been driven out, there remained all around the gap and the stuffing just thrust through a sort of circular pad formed by the tarpaulin, which was rendered still firmer by the irregularities of the fracture with which it had become entangled.

The leak was stanched, but nothing could be more precarious. Those sharp splinters of the gap which fixed the tarpaulin might pierce it and make holes, by which the water would enter, while Gilliatt would not even perceive it in the darkness. There was little probability of the stoppage lasting until daylight. His anxiety changed its form; but he felt it increasing at the same time that he found his strength leaving him.

He had again set to work to bail out the hold; but his arms, in spite of all his efforts, could scarcely lift a scoopful of water. He was naked and shivering. He felt as if the end were now at hand.

One possible chance flashed across his mind. There might be a sail in sight. A fishing-boat which should by any accident be in the neighborhood of the Douvres might come to his assistance. The moment had arrived when a helpmate was absolutely neces-

sary. With a man and a lantern all might yet be saved. If there were two persons, one might easily bail the vessel. Since the leak was temporarily stanched, as soon as she could be relieved of this burden she would rise, and regain her ordinary water-line. The leak would then be above the surface of the water, the repairs would be practicable, and he would be able immediately to replace the stuff by a piece of planking, and thus substitute for the temporary stoppage a complete repair. If not, it would be necessary to wait till daylight, — to wait the whole night long; a delay which might prove ruinous. If by chance some ship's lantern should be in sight, he would be able to signal it from the height of the Great Douvre. The weather was calm, there was no wind or rolling sea; there was a possibility of the figure of a man being observed moving against the background of the starry sky. A captain of a ship, or even the master of a fishing-boat, would not be at night in the waters of the Douvres without directing his glass upon the rock by way of precaution.

Gilliatt hoped that some one might perceive him.

He climbed upon the wreck, grasped the knotted rope, and mounted upon the Great Douvre.

Not a sail was visible around the horizon; not a boat's lantern. The wide expanse, as far as eye could reach, was a desert. No assistance was possible, and no resistance possible.

Gilliatt felt himself without resources, — a feeling which he had not experienced until then.

A dark fatality was now his master. With all his labor, all his success, all his courage, he and his boat, and its precious burden, were about to become the sport of the waves. He had no other means of continuing the struggle; he became listless. How could he prevent the tide from returning, the water from rising, the night from continuing? The temporary stoppage which he had made was his sole reliance. He had exhausted and stripped himself in constructing and completing it; he could neither fortify nor add to it. The stop-gap was such that it must remain as it was; and every further effort was useless. The apparatus, hastily constructed, was at the mercy of the waves. How would this inert obstacle work? It was this obstacle now, not Gilliatt, which had to sustain the combat; that handful of rags, not that intelligence. The swell of a wave would suffice to reopen the fracture. More or less of pressure, — the whole question was comprised in that formula.

All depended upon a brute struggle between two mechanical quantities. Henceforth he could neither aid his auxiliary nor stop his enemy. He was no longer any other than a mere spectator of this struggle, which was one for him of life or death. He who had ruled over it, a supreme intelligence, was at the last moment compelled to resign all to a mere blind resistance.

No trial, no terror that he had yet undergone, could bear comparison with this.

From the time when he had taken up his abode upon the Douvres he had found himself environed, and as it were possessed by solitude. This solitude

more than surrounded, it enveloped him. A thousand menaces at once had met him face to face. The wind was always there, ready to become furious: the sea, ready to roar. There was no stopping that terrible mouth the wind, no imprisoning that dread monster the sea. And yet he had striven; he, a man alone and unaided, had combated hand to hand with the ocean, had wrestled even with the tempest.

Many other anxieties, many other necessities had he made head against. There was no form of distress with which he had not become familiar. He had been compelled to execute great works without tools, to move vast burdens without aid, without science to solve problems, without provisions to find food, without bed or roof to find shelter and sleep.

Upon that solitary rock he had been subjected by turns to all the varied and cruel tortures of Nature, oftentimes a gentle mother, and when it pleased her an executioner.

He had conquered his isolation, conquered hunger, conquered thirst, conquered cold, conquered fever, conquered labor, conquered sleep. He had encountered a mighty coalition of obstacles formed to bar his progress. After his privations there were the elements; after the sea the tempest, after the tempest the devil-fish, after the monster the spectre.

A dismal irony was then the end of all. Upon this rock whence he had thought to arise triumphant, the spectre of Clubin had only arisen to mock him with a hideous smile.

The grin of the spectre was well founded. Gilliatt

saw himself ruined; saw himself no less than Clubin in the grasp of death.

Winter, famine, fatigue, the dismemberment of the wreck, the removal of the machinery, the equinoctial gale, the thunder, the monster, were all as nothing compared with this small fracture in a vessel's planks. Against the cold one could procure — and he had procured — fire; against hunger, the shell-fish of the rocks; against thirst, the rain; against the difficulties of his great task, industry and energy; against the sea and the storm, the breakwater; against the devil-fish, the knife; but against the terrible leak he had no weapon.

The hurricane had bequeathed him this sinister farewell, — the last struggle, the traitorous thrust, the treacherous side blow of the vanquished foe. In its flight the tempest had turned and shot this arrow in the rear. It was the final and deadly stab of his antagonist.

It was possible to combat with the tempest, but how could he struggle with that insidious enemy who now attacked him?

If the stoppage gave way, if the leak reopened, nothing could prevent the sloop from foundering. It would be the bursting of the ligature of the artery; and once under the water with its heavy burden, no power could raise it. The noble struggle, with two months' Titanic labor, ended then in annihilation. To begin again would be impossible. He had neither forge nor materials. At daylight, in all probability, he was about to see all his work sink slowly and irrecoverably into the gulf. Terrible, to feel that

sombre power beneath. The sea snatched his prize from his hands.

With his bark ingulfed, no fate awaited him but to perish of hunger and cold, like the poor shipwrecked sailor on The Man rock.

During two long months the intelligences which hover invisibly over the world had been the spectators of these things: on one hand the wide expanse, the waves, the winds, the lightnings, the meteors; on the other, a man; on one hand the sea, on the other a human mind; on the one hand the Infinite, on the other an atom.

The battle had been fierce, and behold the abortive issue of those prodigies of valor.

Thus did his heroism without parallel end in powerlessness; thus ended in despair that formidable struggle, — that struggle of a nothing against all; that Iliad against one.

Gilliatt gazed wildly into space.

He had no clothing. He stood naked in the midst of that immensity.

Then, overwhelmed by the sense of that unknown infinity, like one bewildered by a strange persecution, confronting the shadows of night, in the presence of that impenetrable darkness, in the midst of the murmur of the waves, the swell, the foam, the breeze, beneath squalls, clouds, and gales, under that vast diffusion of force, under that mysterious firmament of wings, of stars, of gulfs, having around him and beneath him the ocean, above him the constellations, under him the great unfathomable deep, he sank, gave up the struggle, stretched himself upon the rock

at full length, his face towards the stars, humbled, and uplifting his joined hands towards the terrible depths, he cried aloud, "Have mercy!"

Weighed down to earth by that immensity he prayed.

He was there alone, in the darkness upon the rock, in the midst of that sea, stricken down with exhaustion like one smitten by lightning, naked like the gladiator in the circus, save that for circus he had the vast horizon, instead of wild beasts the shadows of darkness, instead of the faces of the crowd the eyes of the unknown, instead of the vestals the stars, instead of Cæsar, God.

His whole being seemed to dissolve in cold, fatigue, powerlessness, prayer, and darkness, and his eyes closed.

CHAPTER VII.

THE APPEAL IS HEARD.

SOME hours passed.

The sun rose in an unclouded sky.

Its first ray shone upon a motionless form upon the Great Douvre. It was Gilliatt.

He was still outstretched upon the rock.

He was naked, cold, and stiff; but be did not shiver. His closed eyelids were wan. It would have been difficult for a beholder to say whether the form before him was not a corpse.

The sun seemed to look upon him.

If he were not dead, he was already so near death that the slightest cold wind would have sufficed to extinguish life.

The wind began to breathe, warm and animating: it was the opening breath of May.

Meanwhile the sun ascended in the deep blue sky; its rays, less horizontal, flushed the sky. Its light became warmth. It enveloped the slumbering form.

Gilliatt moved not. If he breathed, it was only that feeble respiration which could scarcely tarnish the surface of a mirror.

The sun continued its ascent, its rays striking less and less obliquely upon the naked man. The gentle breeze which had been merely tepid became hot.

The rigid and naked body remained still without movement, but the skin seemed less livid.

The sun, approaching the zenith, shone almost perpendicularly upon the plateau of the Douvres. A flood of light descended from the heavens; the vast reflection from the glassy sea increased its splendor; the rock itself imbibed the rays and warmed the sleeper.

A sigh raised his breast.

He lived.

The sun continued its gentle offices. The wind, which was already the breath of summer and of noon, approached him like loving lips that breathed upon him softly.

Gilliatt moved.

The peaceful calm upon the sea was indescribable. Its murmur was like the droning of the nurse beside the sleeping infant. The rock seemed cradled in the waves.

The sea-birds, who knew that form, fluttered above it, — not with their old wild astonishment, but with a sort of fraternal tenderness. They uttered plaintive cries; they seemed to be calling to him. A sea-mew, who no doubt loved him, was tame enough to come near him. It began to speak to him. The sleeper seemed not to hear. The bird hopped upon his shoulder, and pecked his lips softly.

Gilliatt opened his eyes.

The birds dispersed, chattering wildly.

Gilliatt arose, stretched himself like a roused lion, ran to the edge of the platform, and looked down into the space between the two Douvres.

The sloop was there, intact; the stoppage had held out; the sea had probably disturbed it but little.

All was saved.

He was no longer weary. His powers had returned. His swoon had ended in a deep sleep.

He descended and bailed out the sloop, emptied the hold, raised the leakage above the water-line, dressed himself, ate, drank some water, and was joyful.

The gap in the side of his vessel, examined in broad daylight, proved to require more labor than he had thought. It was a serious fracture. The entire day was not too much for its repair.

At daybreak on the morrow, after removing the barrier and reopening the entrance to the defile, dressed in the tattered clothing which had served to stop the leak, having about him Clubin's girdle and the seventy-five thousand francs, standing erect in the sloop, now repaired, by the side of the machinery which he had rescued, with a favorable breeze and a good sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres.

He put the sloop's head for Guernsey.

At the moment of his departure from the rocks, any one who had been there might have heard him singing in an undertone the air of "Bonnie Dundee."

PART III.

DÉRUCHETTE.

BOOK I.

NIGHT AND THE MOON.

CHAPTER I.

THE HARBOR BELL.

THE St. Sampson of the present day is almost a city; the St. Sampson of forty years since was almost a village.

When the winter evenings were ended, and spring had come, the inhabitants were not long out of bed after sundown. St. Sampson was an ancient parish, which had long been accustomed to the sound of the curfew-bell, and had a traditional habit of blowing out the candle at an early hour. Folks there went to bed and rose with the day. Those old Norman villages are generally great rearers of poultry.

The people of St. Sampson, except a few rich families among the townsfolk, are also a population of quarriers and carpenters. The port is a port of ship-repairing. The quarrying of stone and the fashioning of timber go on all day long; here the laborer with the pickaxe, there the workman with the mallet.

At night they sink with fatigue, and sleep like lead. Rude labors bring heavy slumbers.

One evening in the beginning of the month of May, after watching the crescent moon for some moments through the trees, and listening to the step of Déruchette walking alone in the cool air in the garden of Les Bravées, Mess Lethierry had returned to his room looking on the harbor, and had retired to rest; Douce and Grace were already abed. Except Déruchette, the whole household were sleeping. Doors and shutters were everywhere closed. Footsteps were silent in the streets. Some few lights, like winking eyes about to close in rest, showed here and there in windows in the roofs, indicating the hour of domestics going to bed. Nine had already struck by the old Roman clock surrounded by ivy, which shares with the church of St. Brelade at Jersey the peculiarity of having for its day four ones (1111), which are used to signify eleven hundred and eleven.

The popularity of Mess Lethierry at St. Sampson had been founded on his success. The success at an end, there had come a void. It might be imagined that ill-fortune is contagious, and that the unsuccessful have a plague, so rapidly are they put in quarantine. The young men of well-to-do families avoided Déruchette. The isolation around Les Bravées was so complete, that its inmates had not even yet heard the news of the great local event which had that day set all St. Sampson in a ferment. The rector of the parish, the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, had become rich. His uncle, the magnificent Dean of St. Asaph, had just died in London. The news had been brought

by the mail sloop, the "Cashmere," arrived from England that very morning, the mast of which could be perceived in the roads of St. Peter's Port. The "Cashmere" was to depart for Southampton at noon on the morrow, and, so the rumor ran, to convey the reverend gentleman, who had been suddenly summoned to England, to be present at the official opening of the will, not to speak of other urgent matters connected with an important inheritance. All day long St. Sampson had been conversing on this subject. The "Cashmere," the Rev. Ebenezer, his deceased uncle, his riches, his departure, his possible preferment in the future, had formed the foundations of that perpetual buzzing. A solitary house, still uninformed on these matters, had remained at peace. This was Les Bravées.

Mess Lethierry had jumped into his hammock, and he lay there in his clothing.

Since the catastrophe of the Durande, to get into his hammock had been his resource. Every captive has recourse to stretching himself upon his pallet, and Mess Lethierry was the captive of his grief. To go to bed was a truce, a gain in breathing-time, a suspension of ideas. He neither slept, nor watched. Strictly speaking, for two months and a half — for so long was it since his misfortune — Mess Lethierry had been in a sort of somnambulism. He had not yet regained possessiom of his faculties. He was in that cloudy and confused condition of intellect with which those are familiar who have undergone overwhelming afflictions. His reflections were not thought, his sleep was no repose. By day he was not awake,

by night not asleep. He was up, and then gone to rest, that was all. When he was in his hammock, forgetfulness came to him a little. He called that sleeping. Chimeras floated about him and within him. The nocturnal cloud, full of confused faces, traversed his brain. Sometimes it was the Emperor Napoleon dictating to him the story of his life; sometimes there were several Déruchettes; strange birds were in the trees; the streets of Lons-le-Saulnier became serpents. Nightmares were the brief respites of despair. He passed his nights in dreaming, and his days in reverie.

Sometimes he remained all the afternoon at the window of his room, which looked out upon the port, with his head drooping, his elbows on the stone, his ears resting on his fists, his back turned to the whole world, his eye fixed on the old massive iron ring fastened in the wall of the house, at only a few feet from his window, where in the old days he used to moor the Durande. He was looking at the rust which gathered on the ring.

Life was reduced to a mere mechanical function.

The bravest men, when deprived of their most cherished idea, will come to this. His life had become a void. Life is a voyage; the idea is the itinerary. The plan of their course gone, they are at a stand-still. The object is lost, the strength of purpose gone. Fate has a secret discretionary power. It is able to touch with its rod even our moral being. Despair is almost the destitution of the soul. Only the greatest minds resist, and for what?

Mess Lethierry was always meditating — if absorp-

tion can be called meditation — in the depth of a sort of cloudy abyss. Broken words sometimes escaped him like these, "There is nothing left for me now, but to ask my ticket-of-leave from on high."

There was a certain contradiction in that nature complex as the sea, of which Mess Lethierry was, so to speak, the product. Mess Lethierry's grief did not seek relief in prayer.

To be powerless is a certain strength. In the presence of our two great expressions of this blindness — destiny and nature — it is in his powerlessness that man has found his chief support in prayer.

Man seeks succor from his terror; his anxiety bids him kneel.

But Mess Lethierry prayed not.

In the time when he was happy, God existed for him almost in visible contact. Lethierry addressed Him, pledged his word to Him, seemed at times to hold familiar intercourse with Him. But in the hour of his misfortune — a phenomenon not infrequent — the idea of God had become eclipsed in his mind. This happens when the mind has created for itself a deity clothed with human qualities.

In the state of mind in which he existed there was for Lethierry only one clear vision, — the smile of Déruchette. Beyond this all was dark.

For some time, apparently on account of the loss of the Durande, and of the blow which it had been to them, this pleasant smile had been rare. She seemed always thoughtful. Her birdlike playfulness, her childlike ways were gone. She was never seen now in the morning, at the sound of the cannon

which announced daybreak, saluting the rising sun with "Boom! Daylight! Come in, please!" At times her expression was very serious, a sad thing for that sweet nature. She made an effort, however, sometimes to laugh before Mess Lethierry and to divert him; but her cheerfulness grew tarnished from day to day, — gathered dust like the wing of a butterfly with a pin through its body. Whether through sorrow for her uncle's sorrow, — for there are griefs which are the reflections of other griefs, — or whether for any other reasons, she appeared at this time to be much inclined towards religion. In the time of the old rector, M. Jaquemin Hérode, she scarcely went to church, as has been already said, four times a year. Now she was, on the contrary, assiduous in her attendance. She missed no service, either of Sunday or of Thursday. Pious souls in the parish remarked with satisfaction that amendment. For it is a great blessing when a girl who runs so many dangers in the world turns her thoughts towards God. That enables the poor parents at least to be easy on the subject of love-making and what not.

In the evening, whenever the weather permitted, she walked for an hour or two in the garden of Les Bravées. She was almost as pensive there as Mess Lethierry, and almost always alone. Déruchette went to bed last. This, however, did not prevent Douce and Grace watching her a little, by that instinct for spying which is common to servants, — spying is such a relaxation after household work.

As to Mess Lethierry, in the abstracted state of his mind, these little changes in Déruchette's habits

escaped him; moreover, his nature had little in common with the Duenna; he had not even remarked her regularity at the church. Tenacious of his prejudices against the clergy and their sermons, he would have seen with little pleasure these frequent attendances at the parish church. It was not because his own moral condition was not undergoing change. Sorrow is a cloud that changes form.

Robust natures, as we have said, are sometimes almost overthrown by sudden great misfortunes; but not quite. Manly characters such as Lethierry's experience a reaction in a given time. Despair has its backward stages. From prostration we rise to dejection, from dejection to affliction, from affliction to melancholy. Melancholy is a twilight state; suffering melts into it and becomes a sombre joy. Melancholy finds pleasure in being sad.

These elegiac moods were not made for Lethierry. Neither the nature of his temperament nor the character of his misfortune suited those delicate shades. But at the moment at which we have returned to him, the reverie of his first despair had for more than a week been tending to disperse; without, however, leaving him less sad. He was more inactive, was always dull; but he was no longer overwhelmed. A certain perception of events and circumstances was returning to him, and he began to experience something of that phenomenon which may be called the return to reality.

Thus by day in the great lower room he did not listen to the words of those about him, but he heard them. Grace came one morning quite triumphant

to tell Déruchette that he had undone the cover of a newspaper.

This half-acceptance of realities is in itself a good symptom, — a token of convalescence. Great afflictions produce a stupor; it is by such little acts that men return to themselves. This improvement, however, is at first only an aggravation of the evil. The dreamy condition of mind in which the sufferer has lived has served, while it lasted, to blunt his grief. His sight before was thick; he felt little. Now his view is clear, nothing escapes him, and his wounds reopen. Each detail that he perceives serves to remind him of his sorrow. He sees everything again in memory; every remembrance is a regret. All kinds of bitter aftertastes lurk in that return to life. He is better, and yet worse. Such was the condition of Lethierry. In returning to full consciousness, his sufferings had become more distinct.

A sudden shock first recalled him to a sense of reality.

One afternoon, between the 15th and 20th of April, a double-knock at the door of the great lower room of Les Bravées had signalled the arrival of the postman. Douce had opened the door; there was a letter.

The letter came from beyond sea; it was addressed to Mess Lethierry, and bore the postmark "Lisbon."

Douce had carried the letter to Mess Lethierry, who was in his room. He had taken it, placed it mechanically upon the table, and had not looked at it.

The letter remained an entire week upon the table without being unsealed.

It happened one morning, however, that Douce said to Mess Lethierry, —

"Shall I brush the dust off your letter, sir?"

Lethierry seemed to arouse from his lethargy.

"Ay, ay! You are right," he said. And he opened the letter and read as follows: —

AT SEA, March 10.

To Mess Lethierry of St. Sampson.

You will be gratified to receive news of me. I am aboard the "Tamaulipas," bound for the port of "No-return." Among the crew is a sailor named Ahier-Tostevin, from Guernsey, who will return and will have some facts to communicate to you. I take the opportunity of our speaking a vessel, the "Hernan Cortez," bound for Lisbon, to forward you this letter.

You will be astonished to learn that I am going to be honest.

As honest as Sieur Clubin.

I am bound to believe that you know of certain recent occurrences; nevertheless it is perhaps not altogether superfluous to send you a full account of them.

To proceed, then.

I have returned you your money.

Some years ago I borrowed from you, under somewhat irregular circumstances, the sum of fifty thousand francs. Before leaving St. Malo lately I placed in the hands of your confidential man of business, Sieur Clubin, on your account, three bank-notes of one thousand pounds each, — making together seventy-five thousand francs. You will no doubt find this reimbursement sufficient.

Sieur Clubin received your money, including interest, in a remarkably energetic manner. He appeared to me, indeed, singularly zealous. This is, in fact, my reason for apprising you of the facts.

Your other confidential man of business,

RANTAINE.

P. S. — Sieur Clubin was in possession of a revolver, which will explain to you the circumstance of my having no receipt.

He who has ever touched a torpedo or a Leyden-jar fully charged may have a notion of the effect produced on Mess Lethierry by the reading of this letter.

Under that envelope, in that sheet of paper folded in four, to which he had at first paid so little attention, lay the elements of an extraordinary commotion.

He recognized the writing and the signature. As to the facts which the letter contained, at first he understood nothing.

The excitement of the event, however, had, so to speak, set his mind upon its feet again.

The effective part of the shock he had received lay in the phenomenon of the seventy-five thousand francs intrusted by Rantaine to Clubin; this was a riddle which compelled Lethierry's brain to work. Conjecture is a healthy occupation for the mind. Reason is awakened: logic is called into play.

For some time past public opinion in Guernsey had been undergoing a reaction on the subject of Clubin, — that man of such high reputation for honor

during many years; that man so unanimously regarded with esteem. People had begun to question and to doubt; there were wagers pro and con. Some light had been thrown on the question in singular ways. The figure of Clubin began to become clearer, — that is to say, he began to be blacker in the eyes of the world.

A judicial inquiry had taken place at St. Malo, for the purpose of ascertaining what had become of the coastguard-man, number 619. Legal perspicacity had got upon a false scent, a thing which happens not infrequently. It had started with the hypothesis that the man had been enticed by Zuela, and shipped aboard the "Tamaulipas" for Chili. This ingenious supposition had led to a considerable amount of wasted conjecture. The short-sightedness of justice had failed to take note of Rantaine; but in the progress of inquiry the authorities had come upon other clews. The affair, so obscure, became complicated. Clubin had become mixed up with the enigma. A coincidence, perhaps a direct connection had been found between the departure of the "Tamaulipas" and the loss of the Durande. At the wine-shop near the Dinan Gate, where Clubin thought himself entirely unknown, he had been recognized. The wine-shop keeper had talked: Clubin had bought a bottle of brandy that night: for whom? The gunsmith of St. Vincent Street, too, had talked; Clubin had purchased a revolver; for what object? The landlord of the Jean Auberge had talked; Clubin had absented himself in an inexplicable manner. Captain Gertrais-Gaboureau had talked; Clubin had de-

termined to start, although warned, and knowing that he might expect a great fog. The crew of the Durande had talked; in fact, the collection of the freight had been neglected, and the stowage badly arranged, a negligence easy to comprehend if the captain had determined to wreck the ship. The Guernsey passenger, too, had spoken; Clubin had evidently imagined that he had run upon the Hanways. The Torteval people had spoken; Clubin had visited that neighborhood a few days before the loss of the Durande, and had been seen walking in the direction of Pleinmont, near the Hanways. He had with him a travelling-bag. "He had set out with it, and come back without it." The birds'-nesters had spoken; their story seemed to be possibly connected with Clubin's disappearance, if instead of ghosts they supposed smugglers. Finally, the haunted house of Pleinmont itself had spoken; persons who had determined to get information had climbed and entered the windows, and had found inside — what? The very travelling-bag which had been seen in Sieur Clubin's possession. The authorities of the *Douzaine* of Torteval had taken possession of the bag and had it opened. It was found to contain provisions, a spy-glass, a chronometer, a man's clothing, and linen marked with Clubin's initials. All this in the gossip of St. Malo and Guernsey became more and more like a case of fraud. Obscure hints were brought together: there appeared to have been a singular disregard of advice; a willingness to encounter the dangers of the fog; a suspected negligence in the stowage of the cargo. Then there was the mysterious bottle of

brandy; a drunken helmsman; a substitution of the captain for the helmsman; a management of the rudder, to say the least, unskilful. The heroism of remaining behind upon the wreck began to look like roguery. Clubin, besides, had evidently been deceived as to the rock he was on. Granted an intention to wreck the vessel, it was easy to understand the choice of the Hanways, the shore being easily reached by swimming, and the intended concealment in the haunted house awaiting the opportunity for flight. The travelling-bag, that suspicious preparative, completed the demonstration. By what link this affair connected itself with the other affair of the disappearance of the coastguard-man nobody knew. People imagined some connection, and that was all. They had a glimpse in their minds of the lookout-man, number 619, alongside of the mysterious Clubin, — quite a tragic drama. Clubin possibly was not an actor in it, but his presence was visible in the side scenes.

The supposition of a wilful destruction of the Durande did not explain everything. There was a revolver in the story, with no part yet assigned to it. The revolver probably belonged to the other affair.

The scent of the public is keen and true. Its instinct excels in those discoveries of truth by pieces and fragments. Still, amid these facts, which seemed to point pretty clearly to a case of barratry, there were serious difficulties.

Everything was consistent, everything coherent; but a basis was wanting.

People do not wreck vessels for the pleasure of

wrecking them. Men do not run all those risks of fog, rocks, swimming, concealment, and flight without an interest. What could have been Clubin's interest?

The act seemed plain, but the motive was puzzling.

Hence a doubt in many minds. Where there is no motive, it is natural to infer that there was no act.

The missing link was important. The letter from Rantaine seemed to supply it.

This letter furnished a motive for Clubin's supposed crime: seventy-five thousand francs to be appropriated.

Rantaine was the *Deus ex machina.* He had descended from the clouds with a lantern in his hand. His letter was the final light upon the affair. It explained everything, and even promised a witness in the person of Ahier-Tostevin.

The part which it at once suggested for the revolver was decisive. Rantaine was undoubtedly well informed. His letter pointed clearly the explanation of the mystery.

There could be no possible palliation of Clubin's crime. He had premeditated the shipwreck; the proofs were the preparations discovered in the haunted house. Even supposing him innocent, and admitting the wreck to have been accidental, would he not at the last moment, when he had determined to sacrifice himself with the vessel, have intrusted the seventy-five thousand francs to the men who escaped in the long-boat. The evidence was strikingly complete. Now, what had become of Clubin?

He had probably been the victim of his blunder. He had doubtless perished upon the Douvres.

All this construction of surmises, which were not far from the reality, had for several days occupied the mind of Mess Lethierry. The letter from Rantaine had done him the service of setting him to think. He was at first shaken by his surprise; then he made an effort to reflect. He made another effort more difficult still, that of inquiry. He was induced to listen, and even seek conversation. At the end of a week he had become to a certain degree in the world again; his thoughts had regained their coherence, and he was almost restored. He had emerged from his confused and troubled state.

Rantaine's letter, even admitting that Mess Lethierry could ever have entertained any hope of the reimbursement of his money, destroyed that last chance.

It added to the catastrophe of the Durande this new wreck of seventy-five thousand francs. It put him in possession of that amount just so far as to make him sensible of its loss. The letter revealed to him the extreme point in his ruin.

Hence he experienced a new and very painful sensation, which we have already spoken of. He began to take an interest in his household, — what it was to be in the future; how he was to set things in order: matters of which he had taken no heed for two months past. These trifling cares wounded him with a thousand tiny points, worse in their aggregate than the old despair. A sorrow is doubly burdensome which has to be endured in each item, and

while disputing inch by inch with fate for ground already lost. Ruin is endurable in the mass, but not in the dust and fragments of the fallen edifice. The great fact may overwhelm, but the details torture. The catastrophe that at first stunned you, now confuses you. Humiliation comes to aggravate the blow. A second desolation succeeds the first, with features more repulsive. You descend one degree nearer to annihilation. The winding-sheet becomes changed to sordid rags.

No thought is more bitter than that of one's own gradual fall from a social position.

Ruin is simple enough, — a violent shock; a cruel turn of fate; a catastrophe once for all. Be it so. We submit, and all is over. You are ruined: it is well; you are dead? No; you are still living. On the morrow you know it well. By what? By the pricking of a pin. Yonder passer-by omits to recognize you; the tradesmen's bills rain down upon you; and yonder is one of your enemies, who is smiling. Perhaps he is thinking of Arnal's last pun; but it is all the same. The pun would not have appeared to him so inimitable but for your ruin. You read your own sudden insignificance even in looks of indifference. Friends who used to dine at your table become of opinion that three courses were an extravagance. Your faults are patent to the eyes of everybody; ingratitude, having nothing more to expect, proclaims itself openly; every idiot has foreseen your misfortunes. The malignant pull you to pieces; the more malignant profess to pity. And then come a hundred paltry details. Nausea succeeds to grief. You have

been wont to indulge in wine; you must now drink cider. Two servants, too! Why, one will be too many. It will be necessary to discharge this one, and get rid of that. Flowers in your garden are superfluous; you will plant it with potatoes. You used to make presents of your fruits to friends; you will send them henceforth to market. As to the poor, it will be absurd to think of giving anything to them: are you not poor yourself? And then there is the painful question of dress. To have to refuse a wife a new ribbon, — what a torture! To have to refuse one who has made you a gift of her beauty a trifling article; to haggle over such matters, like a miser! Perhaps she will say to you, "What! rob my garden of its flowers, and now refuse one for my bonnet!" Ah me! to have to condemn her to shabby dresses. The family table is silent. You fancy that those around it think harshly of you. Beloved faces have become clouded. This is what is meant by falling fortunes. It is to die day by day. To be struck down is like the blast of the furnace; to decay like this is the torture of the slow fire.

An overwhelming blow is a sort of Waterloo, a slow decay a St. Helena. Destiny, incarnate in the form of Wellington, has still some dignity; but how sordid in the shape of Hudson Lowe. Fate becomes then a paltry huckster. We find the man of Campo Formio quarrelling about a pair of stockings; we see that dwarfing of Napoleon which makes England less. Waterloo and St. Helena! Reduced to humbler proportions, every ruined man has traversed those two phases.

On the evening we have mentioned, and which was one of the first evenings in May, Lethierry, leaving Déruchette to walk by moonlight in the garden, had gone to bed more depressed than ever.

All these mean and repulsive details, peculiar to worldly misfortune, all these trifling cares which are at first insipid and afterwards harassing, were revolving in his mind. A sullen load of miseries! Mess Lethierry felt that his fall was irremediable. What could he do? What would become of them? What sacrifices should he be compelled to impose on Déruchette? Whom should he discharge, — Douce or Grace? Would they have to sell Les Bravées? Would they not be compelled to leave the island? To be nothing where he had been everything; it was a terrible fall indeed!

And to know that the old times were gone forever! To recall those journeys to and fro, uniting France with those numberless islands; the Tuesday's departure, the Friday's return, the crowd on the quay, those great cargoes, that industry, that prosperity, that proud direct navigation, that machinery embodying the will of man, that all-powerful boiler, that smoke, all that reality. The steamboat had been the final crown of the compass; the needle indicating the direct track, the steam-vessel following it; one proposing, the other executing. Where was she now, his Durande, that mistress of the seas, that queen who had made him a king? To have been so long the man of ideas in his own country, the man of success, the man who revolutionized navigation, and then to have to give up all,—to abdicate! to cease to exist,

to become a by-word, an empty bag which once was full! to belong to the past, after having so long represented the future! to come down to be an object for the supercilious pity of fools, to witness the triumph of routine, obstinacy, conservatism, selfishness, ignorance! to see the old barbarous sailing-cutters crawling to and fro upon the sea, the outworn old-world prejudices young again! to have wasted a whole life, — to have been a light, and to suffer this eclipse! Ah, what a sight it was upon the waves, — that noble funnel, that prodigious cylinder, that pillar with its capital of smoke, that column grander than any in the Place Vendôme, for on that there was only a man, while on this stood Progress! The ocean was beneath it; it was certainty upon the open sea. And had all this been witnessed in that little island, in that little harbor, in that little town of St. Sampson? Yes; it had been witnessed. And could it be that, having seen it, all had vanished to be seen no more?

All this series of regrets tortured Lethierry. There is such a thing as a mental sobbing. Never, perhaps, had he felt his misfortune more bitterly. A certain numbness follows this acute suffering. Under the weight of his sorrow he gradually dozed.

For about two hours he remained in this state, feverish, sleeping a little, meditating much. Such torpors are accompanied by an obscure labor of the brain, which is inexpressibly wearying. Towards the middle of the night, about midnight, a little before or a little after, he shook off his lethargy. He aroused, and opened his eyes. His window was directly in front of his hammock. He saw something extraordinary.

A form was before the window, — a marvellous form. It was the funnel of a steam-vessel.

Mess Lethierry started, and sat upright in his bed. The hammock oscillated like a swing in a tempest. Lethierry stared. A vision filled the window-frame. There was the harbor flooded with the light of the moon, and against that glitter, quite close to his house, stood forth, tall, round, and black, a magnificent object.

The funnel of a steam-vessel was there.

Lethierry sprang out of his hammock, ran to the window, lifted the sash, leaned out, and recognized it.

The funnel of the Durande stood before him.

It was in the old place.

Its four chains supported it, made fast to the bulwarks of a vessel in which, beneath the funnel, he could distinguish a dark mass of irregular outline.

Lethierry recoiled, turned his back to the window, and dropped in a sitting posture into his hammock again.

Then he returned, and once more he saw the vision.

An instant afterwards, or in about the time occupied by a flash of lightning, he was out upon the quay, with a lantern in his hand.

A boat carrying a little backward a massive block from which issued the straight funnel before the window of Les Bravées, was made fast to the mooring-ring of the Durande. The bows of the boat stretched beyond the corner of the wall of the house, and were level with the quay.

There was no one aboard.

The vessel was of a peculiar shape. All Guernsey would have recognized it. It was the old Dutch sloop.

Lethierry jumped aboard, and ran forward to the block which he saw beyond the mast.

It was there, entire, complete, intact, standing square and firm upon its cast-iron flooring; the boiler had all its rivets, the axle of the paddle-wheels was raised erect and made fast near the boiler; the feed-pump was in its place; nothing was wanting.

Lethierry examined the machinery.

The lantern and the moon helped him in his examination. He went over every part of the mechanism.

He noticed the two cases at the sides. He examined the axle of the wheels.

He went into the little cabin; it was empty.

He returned to the engine, and felt it, looked into the boiler, and knelt down to examine it inside.

He placed his lantern within the furnace, where the light, illuminating all the machinery, produced almost the illusion of an engine-room with its fire.

Then he burst into a wild laugh, sprang to his feet, and with his eye fixed on the engine, and his arms outstretched towards the funnel, he cried aloud, "Help!"

The harbor-bell was upon the quay, at a few paces distance. He ran to it, seized the chain, and began to pull it violently.

CHAPTER II.

THE HARBOR BELL AGAIN.

GILLIATT in fact, after a passage without accident, but somewhat slow on account of the heavy burden of the sloop, had arrived at St. Sampson after dark, and nearer ten than nine o'clock.

He had calculated the time. The half-flood had arrived. There was plenty of water, and the moon was shining; so that he was able to enter the port.

The little harbor was silent. A few vessels were moored there, with their sails brailed up to the yards, their tops over, and without lanterns. At the far end a few others were visible, high and dry in the dock, where they were undergoing repairs; large hulls dismasted and stripped, with their planking open at various parts, lifting high the ends of their timbers, and looking like huge dead beetles lying on their backs with their legs in the air.

As soon as he had cleared the harbor-mouth, Gilliatt examined the port and the quay. There was no light to be seen either at Les Bravées or elsewhere. The place was deserted, save perhaps by some one going to or returning from the parsonage; nor was it possible to be sure even of this; for the night blurred every outline, and the moonlight always

gives to objects a vague appearance. The distance added to the indistinctness. The parsonage at that period was situated on the other side of the harbor, where there stands at the present day a covered boat-house.

Gilliatt had approached Les Bravées quietly, and had made the sloop fast to the ring of the Durande, under Mess Lethierry's window.

He leaped over the bulwarks, and was ashore.

Leaving the sloop behind him by the quay, he turned the angle of the house, passed along a little narrow street, then along another, did not even notice the pathway which branched off leading to Le Bû de la Rue, and in a few minutes found himself at that corner of the wall where there were wild mallows with pink flowers in June, with holly, ivy, and nettles. Many a time, concealed behind the bushes, seated on a stone, in the summer days, he had watched here through long hours, and even for whole months, often tempted to climb the wall, over which he contemplated the garden of Les Bravées and the two windows of a little room seen through the branches of the trees. The stone was there still; the bushes, the low wall, the angle, as quiet and as dark as ever. Like an animal returning to its hole, gliding rather than walking, he made his way in. Once seated there, he made no movement. He looked around; saw again the garden, the pathways, the beds of flowers, the house, the two windows of the chamber. The moonlight fell upon this dream. He felt it horrible to be compelled to breathe, and did what he could to prevent it.

He seemed to be gazing on a vision of paradise, and was afraid that all would vanish. It was almost impossible that all these things could be really before his eyes; and if they were, it could only be with that imminent danger of melting into air which belongs to things divine. A breath, and all must be dissipated! He trembled with the thought.

Before him, not far off, at the side of one of the alleys in the garden, was a wooden seat painted green. The reader will remember this seat.

Gilliatt looked up at the two windows. He thought of the slumber of some one possibly in that room. Behind that wall she was no doubt sleeping. He wished himself elsewhere, yet would sooner have died than go away. He thought of a gentle breathing moving a woman's breast. It was she, — that vision, that purity in the clouds, that form haunting him by day and night. She was there! He thought of her so far removed, and yet so near as to be almost within reach of his delight; he thought of that impossible ideal, drooping in slumber, and like himself, too, visited by visions; of that being so long desired, so distant, so impalpable, her closed eyelids, her face resting on her hand; of the mystery of sleep in its relations with that pure spirit, of what dreams might come to one who was herself a dream. He dared not think beyond, and yet he did. He ventured on those familiarities which the fancy may indulge in, — the notion of how much was feminine in that angelic being disturbed his thoughts. The darkness of night emboldens timid imaginations to take these furtive glances. He was vexed within himself, feeling on

reflection as if it were profanity to think of her so boldly; yet still constrained, in spite of himself, he tremblingly gazed into the invisible. He shuddered almost with a sense of pain as he imagined her room, a petticoat on a chair, a mantle fallen on the carpet, a band unbuckled, a handkerchief. He imagined her corset with its lace hanging to the ground, her stockings, her boots. His soul was among the stars.

The stars are made for the human heart of a poor man like Gilliatt not less than for that of the rich and great. There is a certain degree of passion by which every man becomes wrapped in a celestial light. With a rough and primitive nature this truth is even more applicable. An uncultivated mind is easily touched with dreams.

Delight is a fulness which overflows like any other. To see those windows was almost too much happiness for Gilliatt.

Suddenly he looked, and saw her.

From the branches of a clump of bushes, already thickened by the spring, there issued with a spectral slowness a celestial figure, a dress, a divine face, almost a shining light beneath the moon.

Gilliatt felt his powers failing him: it was Déruchette.

Déruchette approached; she stopped; she walked back a few paces, stopped again; then returned and sat upon the wooden bench. The moon was in the trees, a few clouds floated among the pale stars; the sea murmured to the shadows in an undertone, the town was sleeping, a thin haze was rising from

the horizon, the melancholy was profound. Déruchette inclined her head, with those thoughtful eyes which look attentive yet see nothing. She was seated sideways, and had nothing on her head but a little cap untied, which showed upon her delicate neck the commencement of her hair. She twirled mechanically a ribbon of her cap around one of her fingers; the half light showed the outline of her hands like those of a statue; her dress was of one of those shades which by night look white; the trees stirred as if they felt the enchantment which she shed around her. The tip of one of her feet was visible. Her lowered eyelids had that vague contraction which suggests a tear checked in its course, or a thought suppressed. There was a charming indecision in the movements of her arms, which had no support to lean on, — a sort of floating mingled with every posture. It was rather a gleam than a light, rather a grace than a goddess. The folds of her dress were exquisite; her face, which might inspire adoration, seemed meditative, like portraits of the Virgin. It was terrible to think how near she was; Gilliatt could hear her breathe.

A nightingale was singing in the distance. The stirring of the wind among the branches set in movement the inexpressible silence of the night. Déruchette, beautiful, divine, appeared in the twilight like a creation from those rays and from the perfumes in the air. That widespread enchantment seemed to concentre and embody itself mysteriously in her; she became its living manifestation. She seemed the outblossoming of all that shadow and silence.

But the shadow and silence which floated lightly about her weighed heavily on Gilliatt. He was bewildered; what he experienced is not to be told in words. Emotion is always new, and the word is always enough; hence the impossibility of expressing it. Joy is sometimes overwhelming. To see Déruchette, to see her herself, to see her dress, her cap, her ribbon, which she twined around her finger, was it possible to imagine it? Was it possible to be thus near her, to hear her breathe? She breathed! then the stars might breathe also. Gilliatt felt a thrill pass through him. He was the most miserable, and yet the happiest of men; he knew not what to do; his delirium at seeing her annihilated him. Was it indeed Déruchette there, and he so near? His thoughts, bewildered and yet fixed, were fascinated by that figure as by a dazzling jewel. He gazed upon her neck, her hair. He did not even say to himself that she would now belong to him; that before long — to-morrow perhaps — he would have the right to take off that cap, to unknot that ribbon. He would not have conceived for a moment the audacity of thinking even so far. Touching in idea is almost like touching with the hand. Love was with Gilliatt like honey to the bear, — an exquisite and delicate dream. He thought confusedly; he knew not what possessed him. The nightingale still sang. He felt as if about to breathe his life out.

The idea of rising, of jumping over the wall, of speaking to Déruchette, never came into his mind. If it had, he would have turned and fled. If anything resembling a thought had begun to dawn in

his mind, it was this: that Déruchette was there, that he wanted nothing more, and that eternity had begun.

A noise aroused them both, — her from her reverie, him from his ecstasy.

Some one was walking in the garden. It was not possible to see who was approaching, on account of the trees. It was the footstep of a man.

Déruchette raised her eyes. The steps drew nearer, then ceased. The person walking had stopped. He must have been quite near. The path beside which was the bench wound between two clumps of trees. The stranger was there in the alley between the trees, at a few paces from the seat.

Accident had so placed the branches that Déruchette could see the new-comer, while Gilliatt could not.

The moon cast on the ground beyond the trees a shadow which reached to the garden seat.

Gilliatt could see this shadow.

He looked at Déruchette.

She was quite pale; her mouth was partly open, as with a suppressed cry of surprise. She had just half risen from the bench, and sunk again upon it. There was in her attitude a mixture of fascination with a desire to fly. Her surprise was enchantment mingled with timidity. She had upon her lips almost the light of a smile, with the fulness of tears in her eyes. She seemed as if transfigured by that presence, as if the being whom she saw before her belonged not to this earth. The reflection of an angel was in her look.

The stranger, who was to Gilliatt only a shadow, spoke. A voice issued from the trees, softer than the voice of a woman; yet it was the voice of a man. Gilliatt heard these words:—

"Mademoiselle, I see you every Sunday and every Thursday. They tell me that once you used not to come so often. It is a remark that has been made. I ask your pardon. I have never spoken to you; it was my duty; but I come to speak to you to-day, for it is still my duty. It is right that I speak to you first. The 'Cashmere' sails to-morrow. This is why I have come. You walk every evening in your garden. It would be wrong of me to know your habits so well, if I had not the thought that I have. Mademoiselle, you are poor; since this morning I am rich. Will you have me for your husband?"

Déruchette joined her two hands in a suppliant attitude, and looked at the speaker, silent, with fixed eyes, and trembling from head to foot.

The voice continued:—

"I love you. God made not the heart of man to be silent. He has promised him eternity with the intention that he should not be alone. There is for me but one woman upon earth: it is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope in you. What wings I have you bear. You are my life, and already my heaven."

"Sir," said Déruchette, "there is no one to answer in the house!"

The voice rose again:—

"I have encouraged this sweet dream. God has

not forbidden us to dream. You are like a glory in my eyes. I love you deeply, mademoiselle. To me you are holy innocence. I know it is the hour at which your household have retired to rest, but I had no choice of any other moment. Do you remember that passage of the Bible which some one read before us? It was the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis. I have thought of it often since. M. Hérode said to me, 'You must have a rich wife.' I replied, 'No, — I must have a poor wife.' I speak to you, mademoiselle, without venturing to approach you; I would step even farther back, if it was your wish that my shadow should not touch your feet. You alone are supreme. You will come to me, if such is your will. I love and wait. You are the living form of a benediction."

"I did not know, sir," stammered Déruchette, "that any one remarked me on Sundays and Thursdays."

The voice continued: —

"We are powerless against celestial things. The whole Law is love. Marriage is Canaan: you are to me the promised land of beauty. O Full of grace, I salute you."

Déruchette replied, "I did not think I did wrong, any more than other persons who are strict."

The voice continued: —

"God manifests his will in the flowers, in the light of dawn, in the spring; and love is of his ordaining. You are beautiful in this holy shadow of night. This garden has been tended by you; in its perfumes there is something of your breath. The

affinities of our souls do not depend on us. They cannot be counted with our sins. You were there, that was all. I was there, that was all. I did nothing but feel that I loved you. Sometimes my eyes rested upon you. I was wrong; but what could I do? It was through looking at you that all happened. I could not restrain my gaze. There are mysterious impulses which are above our search. The heart is the chief of all temples. To have your spirit in my house, — this is the terrestrial paradise for which I hope. Say, will you be mine? As long as I was poor I spoke not. I know your age: you are twenty-one; I am twenty-six. I go to-morrow; if you refuse me, I return no more. Oh, be my betrothed, will you not? More than once have my eyes, in spite of myself, addressed to you that question. I love you; answer me. I will speak to your uncle as soon as he is able to receive me, but I turn first to you. To Rebecca I plead for Rebecca, — unless you love me not."

Déruchette hung her head, and murmured, —

"Oh, I worship him!"

The words were spoken in a voice so low that only Gilliatt heard them.

She remained with her head lowered, as if by shading her face she hoped to conceal her thoughts.

There was a pause. No leaf among the trees was stirred. It was that solemn and peaceful moment when the slumber of external things mingles with the sleep of living creatures, and night seems to listen to the beating of Nature's heart. In the midst of that retirement, like a harmony making the

silence more complete, rose the wide murmur of the sea.

The voice was heard again, —

"Mademoiselle!"

Déruchette started.

Again the voice spoke, —

"Alas! I wait."

"What do you wait for?"

"Your answer."

"God has heard it," said Déruchette.

Then the voice became almost sonorous, and at the same time softer than before, and these words issued from the leaves as from a burning bush: —

"You are my betrothed. Come then to me. Let the blue sky, with all its stars, be witness of this taking of my soul to thine; and let our first embrace be mingled with that firmament."

Déruchette arose, and remained an instant motionless, looking straight before her, doubtless in another's eyes. Then, with slow steps, with head erect, her arms drooping, but with the fingers of her hands wide apart, like one who leans on some unseen support, she advanced towards the trees, and was out of sight.

A moment afterwards, instead of the one shadow upon the gravelled walk, there were two. They mingled together. Gilliatt saw at his feet the embrace of those two shadows.

In certain moments of crisis, time flows from us as his sands from the hour-glass, and we have no feeling of his flight. That pair on the one hand, who were ignorant of the presence of a witness, and

saw him not; on the other, that witness of their joy, who could not see them, but who knew of their presence, — how many minutes did they remain thus in that mysterious suspension of themselves? It would be impossible to say. Suddenly a noise burst forth at a distance. A voice was heard crying, "Help!" and the harbor bell began to sound. It is probable that in those celestial transports of delight they heard no echo of that tumult.

The bell continued to ring. Any one who had sought Gilliatt then in the angle of the wall would have found him no longer there.

BOOK II.

GRATITUDE AND DESPOTISM.

CHAPTER I.

JOY AND ANGUISH MINGLE.

Mess Lethierry pulled the bell furiously, then stopped abruptly. A man had just turned the corner of the quay. It was Gilliatt.

Lethierry ran towards him, or rather flung himself upon him, seized his hand between his own hands, and looked him in the face for a moment, silent. It was the silence of an explosion struggling to find an issue.

Then pulling and shaking him with violence, and squeezing him in his arms, he compelled him to enter the lower room of Les Bravées, pushed back with his heel the door which had remained half opened, sat down, or sank into a chair beside a great table lighted by the moon, the reflection of which gave a vague pallor to Gilliatt's face, and with a voice of intermingled laughter and tears, cried: —

"Ah, my son! my player of the bagpipe! I knew well that it was you. The sloop, parbleu! Tell me the story. You went there, then. Why, they would have burned you a hundred years ago!

It is magic! There is n't a screw missing. I have looked at everything already, recognized everything, handled everything. I guessed that the paddles were in the two cases. And here you are once more! I have been looking for you in the little cabin. I rang the bell. I was seeking for you. I said to myself, 'Where is he, that I may devour him?' One must admit that wonderful things do come to pass. This fellow comes back from the Douvres, and he has brought back life to me. *Tonnerre!* you are an angel! Yes, yes, yes; it is my engine. Nobody will believe it; people will see it and say, 'It can't be true.' Why! everything is there. Everything! Not a tap, not a pin missing. The feed-pipe has never budged an inch. It is incredible that there should have been no more damage. We have only to put a little oil. But how did you accomplish it? To think that the Durande will be moving again! The axle of the wheels must have been taken to pieces by some watchmaker. Give me your word that I am not crazy."

He sprang to his feet, breathed a moment, and continued: —

"Assure me of that. What a revolution! I pinched myself to be certain I was not dreaming. You are my child, you are my son, you are my Providence. Brave lad! to go and fetch my good old engine, — in the open sea, among those cut-throat rocks. I have seen some strange things in my life; nothing like that. I have known Parisians who were veritable demons, but I'll defy them to have done that. It beats the Bastille. I have seen the

gauchos laboring in the Pampas, with a crooked branch of a tree for a plough and a bundle of thorn-bushes for a harrow, dragged by a leathern strap; they get harvests of wheat that way, with grains as big as hedgenuts. But that is a trifle compared with your feats. You have performed a miracle — a real one. Ah! *gredin!* let me hug you. You will make the whole country happy. How they will gossip in St. Sampson! I shall set to work at once to build the boat. It is astonishing that the crank is all right. Gentlemen, he has been to the Douvres: I say to the Douvres. He went alone. The Douvres! I defy you to find a worse spot. Do you know, have they told you, that it 's proved that Clubin sent the Durande to the bottom to swindle me out of money which he had to bring me? He made Tangrouille drunk. It 's a long story. I 'll tell you another day of his piratical tricks. I, stupid idiot, had confidence in Clubin. But he trapped himself, the villain, for he could n't have got away. There is a God above, scoundrel! Do you see, Gilliatt, bang! bang! the irons in the fire; we 'll begin at once to rebuild the Durande. We 'll have her twenty feet longer. They build them longer now than they did. I 'll buy the wood from Dantzic and Brême. Now I 've got the machinery they will give me credit again. They 'll have confidence now."

Mess Lethierry stopped, lifted his eyes with that look which sees the heavens through the roof, and muttered, "Yes, there is a power on high!"

Then he placed the middle finger of his right hand between his two eyebrows, and tapped with his nail

there, — an action which indicates a project passing through the mind, — and he continued: —

"Nevertheless, to begin again, on a grand scale, a little ready money would have been useful. Ah, if I only had my three bank-notes, the seventy-five thousand francs that that robber Rantaine returned, and that vagabond Clubin stole!"

Gilliatt silently felt in his pocket, and drew out something which he placed before him. It was the leathern belt that he had brought back. He opened, and spread it out upon the table; in the inside the word "Clubin" could be deciphered in the light of the moon. He then took out of the pocket of the belt a box, and out of the box three pieces of paper, which he unfolded and offered to Lethierry.

Lethierry examined them. It was light enough to read the figures "1000," and the word "thousand" was also perfectly visible. Mess Lethierry took the three notes, placed them on the table, one beside the other, looked at them, looked at Gilliatt, stood for a moment dumb and then began again, like an eruption after an explosion: —

"These too! You are a marvel. My bank-notes, — all three! A thousand pounds each. My seventy-five thousand francs! Why, you must have gone down to the infernal regions! It is Clubin's belt. Pardieu! I can read his vile name. Gilliatt has brought back engine and money too. There will be something to put in the papers. I will buy some timber of the finest quality. I guess how it was; you found his carcass, — Clubin mouldering away in some corner. We 'll have some Dantzic pine and Brême oak; we 'll

have a first-rate planking, — oak within and pine without. In old times they did n't build so well, but their work lasted longer; the wood was better seasoned, because they did not build so much. We 'll build the hull perhaps of elm. Elm is good for the parts in the water. To be dry sometimes, and sometimes wet, rots the timbers; the elm requires to be always wet; it 's a wood that feeds upon water. What a splendid Durande we 'll build. The lawyers will not trouble me again. I shall want no more credit. I have some money of my own. Did ever any one see a man like this Gilliatt? I was struck down to the ground; I was a dead man. He comes and sets me up again as firm as ever. And all the while I was never thinking about him; he had gone clean out of my mind. But I recollect everything now. Poor lad! Ah! by the way, you know you are to marry Déruchette."

Gilliatt leaned with his back against the wall, like one who staggers, and said in a tone very low but distinct, —

"No."

Mess Lethierry started.

"How, no!"

Gilliatt replied, —

"I do not love her."

Mess Lethierry went to the window, opened and reclosed it, took the three bank-notes, folded them, placed the iron box on top, scratched his head, seized Clubin's belt, flung it violently against the wall, and exclaimed, —

"You must be mad."

He thrust his fists into his pockets, and exclaimed, —

"You don't love Déruchette? What! was it at me, then, that you used to play the bagpipe?"

Gilliatt, still supporting himself by the wall, turned pale, as a man near his end. As he became pale, Lethierry became redder.

"There 's an idiot for you! He does n't love Déruchette. Very good; make up your mind to love her, for she shall never marry any but you. A devilish pretty story that; and you think that I believe you. If there is anything really the matter with you, send for a doctor; but don't talk nonsense. You can't have had time to quarrel, or get out of temper with her. It is true that lovers are great fools sometimes. Come, now, what are your reasons? If you have any, say. People don't make geese of themselves without reasons. But I have wool in my ears; perhaps I did n't understand. Repeat to me what you said."

Gilliatt replied, —

"I said, No!"

"You said, No! He holds to it, the lunatic! You must be crazy. You said, No! Here 's a stupidity beyond anything ever heard of. Why, people have had their heads shaved for much less than that. What! you don't love Déruchette? Oh, then, it was out of affection for the old man that you did all these things? It was for the sake of papa that you went to the Douvres, that you endured cold and heat, and were half dead with hunger and thirst, and ate the vermin off the rocks, and had the fog, the

rain, and the wind for your bedroom, and brought me back my machine, just as you might bring a pretty woman her little canary that had escaped from its cage. And the tempest that we had three days ago: do you think I don't bear it in mind? You must have had a time of it! It was in the midst of all this misery, alongside of my old craft, that you shaped, and cut, and turned, and twisted, and dragged about, and filed, and sawed, and carpentered, and schemed, and performed more miracles there by yourself than all the saints in paradise. Ah, you annoyed me enough once with your bagpipe! They call it a *biniou* in Brittany. Always the same tune too, silly fellow! And yet you don't love Déruchette? I don't know what is the matter with you. I recollect it all now. I was there in the corner; Déruchette said, 'He shall be my husband;' and so you shall. You don't love her! All things considered, I don't understand it. Either you must be mad, or else I am mad. And you stand there, and speak not a word. I tell you you are not at liberty to do all the things you have done, and then say, after all, 'I don't love Déruchette.' People don't do others services in order to put them in a passion. Well; if you don't marry her, she shall be single all her life. In the first place, I shall want you. You must be the pilot of the Durande. Do you imagine I mean to part with you like that? No, no, my brave boy, I don't let you go. I have got you now; I'll not even listen to you. Where will they find a sailor like you? You are the man I want. But why don't you speak?"

Meanwhile the harbor bell had aroused the household and the neighborhood. Douce and Grace had risen, and had just entered the lower room, silent and astonished. Grace had a candle in her hand. A group of neighbors, townspeople, sailors, and peasants, who had rushed out of their houses, were outside on the quay, gazing in wonderment at the funnel of the Durande in the sloop. Some, hearing Lethierry's voice in the lower room, began to glide in by the half-opened door. Between the faces of two worthy old women appeared that of Sieur Landoys, who had the good fortune always to find himself where he would have regretted to be absent.

Great joys like nothing better than a crowd of witnesses. The sort of scattered support which a crowd presents pleases them at such times; their delight draws new life from it. Mess Lethierry suddenly perceived that there were persons about him, and he welcomed the audience at once.

"Ah! you are here, my friends? I am very glad to see you. You know the news? That man has been there and brought it back. How d' ye do, Sieur Landoys? When I woke up just now, the first thing I spied was the funnel. It was under my window. There 's not a nail missing. They make pictures of Napoleon's deeds; but I think more of that than of the battle of Austerlitz. You have just left your beds, my good friends. The Durande has found you sleeping. While you are putting on your nightcaps and blowing out your candles there are others working like heroes. We are a set of cowards and do-

nothings; we sit at home rubbing our rheumatisms, but happily that does not prevent there being some of another stamp. These plucky fellows know where to go, and what to do. The man of Le Bû de la Rue has arrived from the Douvres rocks. He has fished up the Durande from the bottom of the sea, and fished up my money out of Clubin's pocket from a greater depth still. But how did you contrive to do it? All the powers of darkness were against you, — the wind and the sea, the sea and the wind. It 's true enough that you are a magician. Those who say that are not so stupid, after all. The Durande is back again. The tempests may rage now; that cuts the ground from under them. My friends, I can inform you that there was no shipwreck, after all. I have examined all the machinery. It is like new, — perfect. The valves go as easily as rollers; you would think them made yesterday. You know that the waste-water is carried away by a tube inside another tube, through which comes the water for the boilers; this was to economize the heat. Well, the two tubes are there as good as ever, — the complete engine, in fact. She is all there, — her wheels and all. Ah, you shall marry her!"

"Marry the complete engine?" asked Sieur Landoys.

"No; Déruchette, — yes, the engine; both of them; he shall be my double son-in-law. He shall be her captain. Good-day, Captain Gilliatt; for there will soon be a captain of the Durande. We are going to do a world of business again. There will be trade, circulation, cargoes of oxen and sheep. I would n't

give St. Sampson for London now. And there stands the author of all this. It was a curious adventure, I can tell you. You will read about it on Saturday in old Mauger's 'Gazette.' This must be 'Gilliatt the Evil One.' What 's the meaning of these louis-d'ors here?"

Mess Lethierry had just observed, through the opening of the lid, that there was some gold in the box upon the notes. He seized it, opened and emptied it into the palm of his hand, and put the handful of guineas on the table.

"For the poor, Sieur Landoys. Give those sovereigns from me to the constable of St. Sampson. You recollect Rantaine's letter; I showed it to you. Very well; I 've got the bank-notes. Now we can buy some oak and fir, and go to work at carpentering. Look you! Do you remember the weather of three days ago? What a hurricane of wind and rain! Gilliatt endured all that upon the Douvres; that did n't prevent his taking the wreck to pieces as I might take my watch. Thanks to him, I am on my legs again. Old 'Lethierry's galley' is going to run again, ladies and gentlemen,—a nut-shell with a couple of wheels and a funnel. I always had that idea. I used to say to myself, 'One day I will do it.' That was a good long time back. It was an idea that came in my head at Paris, at the coffee-house at the corner of the Rue Christine and the Rue Dauphine, when I was reading a paper which had an account of it. Do you know that Gilliatt would think nothing of putting the machine at Marly in his pocket and walking about with it? He is wrought-

iron, that man, — tempered steel, a diamond, a mariner of invaluable qualities, an excellent smith, an extraordinary fellow and a right earnest one, more astonishing than the Prince of Hohenlohe. That is what I call a man with brains. We are children by the side of him. Sea-wolves we may think ourselves; but the sea-lion is there. Hurrah for Gilliatt! I do not know how he has done it; but certainly he must have been the devil. And how can I do other than give him Déruchette?"

For some minutes Déruchette had been in the room. She had not spoken or moved since she entered. She had glided in like a shadow, had sat down almost unperceived behind Mess Lethierry, who stood before her, loquacious, stormy, joyful, abounding in gestures, and talking in a loud voice. A little while after her another silent apparition had appeared. A man attired in black, with a white cravat, holding his hat in his hand, stood in the doorway. There were now several candles among the group, which had gradually increased in number. These lights were near the man attired in black. His profile and youthful and pleasing complexion showed itself against the dark background with the clearness of an engraving on a medal. He leaned with his shoulder against the framework of the door, and held his left hand to his forehead, — an attitude of unconscious grace, which contrasted the breadth of his forehead with the smallness of his hand. There was an expression of anguish in his contracted lips, as he looked on and listened with profound attention. The standers-by having recognized M. Caudray, the

rector of the parish, had fallen back to allow him to pass; but he remained upon the threshold. There was hesitation in his posture, but decision in his looks, which now and then met those of Déruchette. With regard to Gilliatt, whether by chance or design, he was in shadow, and was only perceived indistinctly.

At first Mess Lethierry did not observe Caudray, but he saw Déruchette. He went to her and kissed her fervently upon the forehead, stretching forth his hand at the same time towards the dark corner where Gilliatt was standing.

"Déruchette," he said, "we are rich again; and there is your future husband."

Déruchette raised her head, and looked into the dusky corner bewildered.

Mess Lethierry continued:—

"The marriage shall take place immediately, if it can; they shall have a license; the formalities here are not very troublesome; the Dean can do what he pleases; people are married before they have time to turn round. It is not as in France, where you must have bans, and publications, and delays, and all that fuss. You will be able to boast of being the wife of a brave man, whom no one can say a word against. I thought of him from the day when I saw him come back from Herm with the little cannon. But now he comes back from the Douvres with his fortune and mine, and the fortune of this country,—a man of whom the world will talk a great deal more one day. You said once, 'I will marry him;' and you shall marry him, and you shall have little children,

and I will be grandpapa; and you will have the good fortune to be the wife of a noble fellow, who can work, who can be useful to his fellow-men; a surprising fellow, worth a hundred others; a man who can rescue other people's inventions, a providence! At all events, you will not have married, like so many other silly girls about here, a soldier or a priest, that is, a murderer or a liar. But what are you doing there, Gilliatt? Nobody can see you. Douce, Grace, everybody there! Bring a light, I say. Light up my son-in-law for me. I betroth you to each other, my children: here stands your husband, here my son, Gilliatt of Le Bû de la Rue, that noble fellow, that great seaman! I will have no other son-in-law, and you no other husband. I pledge my word to that once more in God's name. Ah! you are there, Monsieur the curé. You will marry these young people for us."

Lethierry's eye had just fallen upon Caudray.

Douce and Grace had done as they were directed. Two candles placed upon the table cast a light upon Gilliatt from head to foot.

"There's a fine fellow," said Mess Lethierry.

Gilliatt's appearance was hideous.

He was in the condition in which he had that morning set sail from the rocks, — in rags, his bare elbows showing through his sleeves, his beard long, his hair rough and wild, his eyes bloodshot, his skin peeling, his hands covered with wounds, his feet naked. Some of the blisters left by the devil-fish were still visible upon his arms.

Lethierry gazed at him.

"This is my son-in-law," he said. "How he has struggled with the sea! He is all in rags. What shoulders; what hands! There 's a splendid fellow!"

Grace ran to Déruchette and supported her head. She had fainted.

CHAPTER II.

THE LEATHERN TRUNK.

At break of day St. Sampson was on foot, and all the people of St. Peter's Port began to flock there. The resurrection of the Durande caused a commotion in the island not unlike what was caused by the Salette in the south of France. There was a crowd on the quay staring at the funnel standing erect in the sloop. They were anxious to see and handle the machinery; but Lethierry, after making a new and triumphant survey of the whole by daylight, had placed two sailors aboard with instructions to prevent any one approaching it. The funnel, however, furnished food enough for contemplation. The crowd gaped with astonishment; they talked of nothing but Gilliatt; they remarked on his surname of the "Evil One," and their admiration wound up with the remark, "It is not pleasant to have people in the island who can do things like that."

Mess Lethierry was seen from outside the house, seated at a table before the window, writing with one eye on the paper and another on the sloop. He was so completely absorbed that he had only once stopped to call Douce and ask after Déruchette. Douce replied, "Mademoiselle has risen and is gone

out." Mess Lethierry replied, "She is right to take the air. She was a little unwell last night, owing to the heat. There was a crowd in the room. This, and her surprise and joy, and the windows being all closed, overcame her. She will have a husband to be proud of." And he had gone on with his writing. He had already finished and sealed two letters, addressed to the most important shipbuilders at Bremen. He now finished the sealing of a third.

The noise of a wheel upon the quay induced him to look up. He leaned out of the window and observed coming from the path which led to Le Bû de la Rue a boy pushing a wheelbarrow. The boy was going towards St. Peter's Port. In the barrow was a portmanteau of brown leather, studded with nails of brass and white metal.

Mess Lethierry called to the boy, "Where are you going, my lad?"

The boy stopped, and replied, "To the 'Cashmere.'"

"What for?"

"To take this trunk aboard."

"Very good; you shall take these three letters too."

Mess Lethierry opened the drawer of his table, took a piece of string, tied the three letters which he had just written across and across, and threw the packet to the boy, who caught it between his hands.

"Tell the captain of the 'Cashmere' they are my letters, and to take care of them. They are for Germany, — Bremen *via* London."

"I can't speak to the captain, Mess Lethierry."

"Why not?"

"The 'Cashmere' is not at the quay."

"Ah!"

"She is in the roads."

"Ay, true; on account of the sea."

"I can only speak to the man who takes the things aboard."

"You will tell him, then, to look to the letters."

"Very well, Mess Lethierry."

"At what time does the 'Cashmere' sail?"

"At twelve."

"The tide will flow at noon; she will have it against her."

"But she will have the wind," answered the lad.

"Boy," said Mess Lethierry, pointing with his forefinger at the engine in the sloop, "do you see that? There is something which laughs at winds and tides."

The boy put the letters in his pocket, took up the handles of the barrow again, and went on his way towards the town. Mess Lethierry called, "Douce! Grace!"

Grace opened the door a little way.

"What is it, Mess?"

"Come in and wait a moment."

Mess Lethierry took a sheet of paper, and began to write. If Grace, standing behind him, had been curious, and had leaned forward while he was writing, she might have read as follows: —

"I have written to Bremen for the timber. I have appointments all the morning with carpenters for the estimate. The rebuilding will go on fast. You must go yourself to the Deanery for a license. It is my wish

that the marriage should take place as soon as possible; immediately would be better. I am attending to the Durande. You must attend to Déruchette."

He dated it, and signed "Lethierry." He did not take the trouble to seal it, but merely folded it in four and handed it to Grace, saying, —

"Take that to Gilliatt."

"To Le Bû de La Rue?"

"To Le Bû de La Rue."

BOOK III.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE "CASHMERE."

CHAPTER I.

THE HAVELET NEAR THE CHURCH.

When there is a crowd at St. Sampson, St. Peter's Port is soon deserted. A point of curiosity at a given place is like an air-pump. News travels fast in small places. Going to see the funnel of the Durande under Mess Lethierry's window had been since sunrise the business of the Guernsey folks. Every other event was eclipsed by this. The death of the Dean of St. Asaph was forgotten, together with the question of the Rev. Mr. Caudray, his sudden riches, and the departure of the "Cashmere." The machinery of the Durande brought back from the Douvres rocks was the order of the day. People were incredulous. The shipwreck had appeared extraordinary, the salvage seemed impossible. Everybody hastened to assure himself of the truth by the help of his own eyes. Business of every kind was suspended. Long strings of townsfolk with their families, from the "Vesin" up to the "Mess," men and women, gentlemen, mothers with children, infants with dolls, were coming by every road or path-

way to see "the thing to be seen" at Les Bravées, turning their backs upon St. Peter's Port. Many shops at St. Peter's Port were closed. In the Commercial Arcade there was an absolute stagnation in buying and selling. The Durande alone obtained attention. Not a single shopkeeper had had a "handsell" that morning, except a jeweller, who was surprised at having sold a wedding-ring to "a sort of man who appeared in a great hurry, and who asked for the house of the Dean." The shops which remained open were centres of gossip, where loiterers discussed the miraculous salvage. There was not a foot-passenger at the Hyvreuse, which is known in these days — nobody knows why — as Cambridge Park; no one was in the High Street, then called the Grande Rue, nor in Smith Street, known then only as the Rue des Forges; nobody in Hauteville. The Esplanade itself was deserted. One might have guessed it to be Sunday. A visit from a royal personage to review the militia at the Ancresse could not have emptied the town more completely. All this hubbub about "a nobody" like Gilliatt caused a good deal of shrugging of the shoulders among persons of grave and correct habits.

The church of St. Peter's Port, with its three gable-ends placed side by side, its transept and its steeple, stands at the water's side at the end of the harbor, and nearly on the landing-place itself, where it welcomes those who arrive and gives the departing "God-speed." It represents the capital letter at the beginning of that long line which forms the front of the town towards the sea.

It is both the parish church of St. Peter's Port and the chief place of the Deanery of the whole island. Its officiating minister is the surrogate of the bishop, — a clergyman in full orders.

The harbor of St. Peter's Port — a very fine and large port at the present day — was at that epoch, and even up to ten years ago, less considerable than the harbor of St. Sampson. It was enclosed by two enormous thick walls, beginning at the water's edge on both sides, and curving till they almost joined again at the extremities, where there stood a little white light-house. Under this light-house a narrow gullet, bearing still the two rings of the chain with which it was the custom to bar the passage in ancient times, formed the entrance for vessels. The harbor of St. Peter's Port might be well compared with the claws of a huge lobster opened a little way. This kind of pincers took from the ocean a portion of the sea, which it compelled to remain calm. But during the easterly winds the waves rolled heavily against the narrow entrance, the port was agitated, and it was better not to enter. This is what had happened with the "Cashmere" that day, which had accordingly anchored in the roads.

The vessels during the easterly winds preferred this course, which besides saved them the port dues. On these occasions the boatmen of the town — a hardy race of mariners whom the new port has thrown out of employment — came in their boats to fetch passengers at the landing-place or at stations on the shore, and carried them with their luggage, often in heavy seas, but always without accident, to the vessels about

to sail. The east wind blows off the shore, and is very favorable for the passage to England; the vessel at such times rolls, but does not pitch.

When a vessel happened to be in the port everybody embarked from the quay; when it was in the roads they took their choice, and embarked from any point of the coast near the moorings. In every creek men could be found ready to volunteer their services as boatmen.

The Havelet was one of these creeks. This little harbor (which is the signification of the word) was near the town, but was so solitary that it seemed far off. This solitude was owing to the shelter of the high cliffs of Fort St. George, which overlook this retired inlet. The Havelet was accessible by several paths. The most direct was along the water's side. It had the advantage of leading to the town and to the church in five minutes' walk, and the disadvantage of being covered by the sea twice a day. The other paths were more or less abrupt, and led down to the creek through gaps in the steep rocks. Even in broad daylight it was dusk in the Havelet. Huge blocks overhanging it on all sides and thick bushes and brambles cast a sort of soft twilight upon the rocks and waves below. Nothing could be more peaceful than this spot in calm weather, nothing more tumultuous during heavy seas. There were ends of branches there which were always wet with the foam. In the spring-time the place was full of flowers, of nests, of perfumes, of birds, of butterflies and bees. Thanks to recent improvements, this wild nook no longer exists. Fine straight lines have taken

the place of these wild features; masonry, quays, and little gardens have made their appearance; earthwork has been the rage, and taste has finally subdued the eccentricities of the cliff and the irregularities of the rocks below.

CHAPTER II.

DESPAIR CONFRONTS DESPAIR.

It was a little before ten o'clock in the morning. The crowd at St. Sampson, according to all appearance, was increasing. The multitude, feverish with curiosity, was moving towards the north; and the Havelet, which is in the south, was more deserted than ever.

Notwithstanding this, there was a boat there, and a boatman. In the boat was a travelling-bag. The boatman seemed to be waiting for some one.

The "Cashmere" was visible at anchor in the roads. As she did not start till mid-day, there was as yet no sign of moving aboard.

A passer-by, who had listened from one of the ladder-paths up the cliffs overhead, would have heard a murmur of words in the Havelet; and if he had leaned over the overhanging cliff, might have seen at some distance from the boat, in a corner among the rocks and branches, where the eye of the boatman could not reach them, a man and a woman. It was Caudray and Déruchette.

These obscure nooks on the sea-shore, the chosen places of lady-bathers, are not always so solitary as is believed. Persons are sometimes observed and heard

there. Those who seek shelter and solitude in them may easily be followed through the thick bushes, and, thanks to the multiplicity and entanglement of the paths, the granite and the shrubs which favor the stolen interview may also favor the witness.

Caudray and Déruchette stood face to face, looking into each other's eyes, and holding each other by the hand. Déruchette was speaking. Caudray was silent; a tear that had gathered upon his eyelash hung there and did not fall.

Grief and strong passion were imprinted in his calm, religious countenance; a painful resignation was there too, — a resignation hostile to faith, though springing from it. Upon that face, simply devout until then, there was the beginning of a fatal expression. He who had hitherto meditated only on doctrine had begun to meditate on Fate, — an unhealthy meditation for a priest. Faith dissolves under its action; nothing disturbs the religious mind more than that bending under the weight of the unknown. The man awaits the event as the sufferer awaits the touch that may pain or cure. Life seems a perpetual succession of events, to which man submits. We never know from which direction the sudden blow will come. Misery and happiness make their entrances or their exits like unexpected guests. Their laws, their orbit, their principle of gravitation, are beyond man's grasp. Virtue conducts not to happiness, nor crime to retribution. Conscience has one logic, fate another, and they do not coincide. Nothing is foreseen; we live confusedly, and blow upon blow descends upon us. Conscience is the straight line,

life is the whirlwind, which creates above man's head either black chaos or the blue sky. Fate does not practise the art of gradations; her wheel turns sometimes so fast that we can scarcely distinguish the interval between one revolution and another, or the link between yesterday and to-day. Caudray was a believer whose faith did not exclude reason, and whose priestly training did not shut him out from passion. Those religious systems which impose celibacy on the priesthood are not without reason for it. Nothing really destroys the individuality of the priest more than love. All sorts of clouds seemed to darken Caudray's soul. He looked too long into Déruchette's eyes. Those two beings worshipped each other.

There was in Caudray's eye the mute adoration of despair.

Déruchette spoke.

"You must not leave me. I shall not have strength. I thought I could say good-by to you; I cannot. Why did you come yesterday? You should not have come if you were going so soon. I never spoke to you. I loved you, but did not know it. Only that day, when M. Hérode read to us the story of Rebecca, and when your eyes met mine, my cheeks were like fire, and I thought only of how Rebecca's face must have burned like mine; and yet if any one had said to me yesterday, 'Déruchette, you love the rector,' I should have laughed at it. That is why this love is so terrible. It has been like a treason. I did not take heed. I went to the church; I saw you; I thought everybody there was like myself. I

do not reproach you; you did nothing to make me love you; you did not try; you did nothing but look at me; it is not your fault if you look at people; and yet that made me love you so much. I did not even suspect it. When you took up the book it was a flood of light; when others took it, it was only a book. You raised your eyes sometimes to mine; you spoke of archangels; oh, you were my archangel! What you said penetrated my thoughts at once. Before then I know not even whether I believed in God. Since I have known you I have learned to pray. I used to say to Douce, 'Dress me quickly, lest I should be late at the service,' and I hastened to the church. So it was with me to love some one. I did not know the cause. I said to myself, 'How devout I am becoming.' It is from you that I have learned that I do not go to church for God's service. It is true, I went for your sake. You are beautiful; you speak so well; and when you raised your arms to heaven you seemed to hold my heart within your two white hands. I was foolish; I did not know it. Shall I tell you your fault? It was your coming to me in the garden; it was your speaking to me at all. If you had said nothing, I should have known nothing. If you had gone, I should perhaps have been sad, but now I shall die. Since I know that I love you, you cannot leave me. What are you thinking of? You do not seem to listen to me."

Caudray replied, —

"You heard what was said last night?"

"Ah, me!"

"What can I do against that?"

They were silent for a moment. Caudray continued: —

"There is but one duty left to me: it is to go."

"And mine to die. Oh, I wish there was no sea, but only sky. It seems to me as if that would settle all, and that our departure would be the same. It was wrong to speak to me; why did you speak to me? Do not go. What will become of me? I tell you I shall die! You will be far off when I shall be in my grave. Oh, my heart will break! I am very wretched; yet my uncle is not unkind."

It was the first time in her life that Déruchette had ever said "my uncle;" until then she had always said "my father."

Caudray stepped back, and made a sign to the boatman. Déruchette heard the sound of the boat-hook in the shingle and the step of the man on the gunwale of the boat.

"No! no!" cried Déruchette.

"It must be," replied Caudray.

"No! never! For the sake of an engine — impossible! Did you see that horrible man last night? You cannot abandon me thus. You are wise; you can find a means. It is impossible that you bade me come here this morning with the idea of leaving me. I have never done anything to deserve this; you can have no reproach to make me. Is it by that vessel that you intended to sail? I will not let you go. You shall not leave me. Heaven does not open, to close so soon upon us. I tell you that you must not go; besides, it is not yet time. Oh, I love you!"

And pressing closely to him, she interlaced the fingers of both hands behind his neck, as if partly to make a bond of her two arms for detaining him, and partly with her joined hands to pray. He moved away this gentle restraint, while Déruchette resisted as long as she could.

Déruchette sank upon a projection of the rock covered with ivy, lifting by an unconscious movement the sleeve of her dress up to the elbow and showing her graceful arm. A pale suffused light was in her eyes. The boat was approaching.

Caudray held her head between his hands. The young girl seemed as if bowed in widowhood; in the manner of the young man there was something almost paternal. He touched her hair with a sort of religious care, fixed his eyes upon her for some moments, then left on her forehead one of those kisses which, it seems, should give birth to a star, and in an accent trembling with supreme anguish, and in which might have been traced the uprooting of his soul, he uttered the word which has so often resounded in the depths of the human heart, "Farewell!"

Déruchette burst into loud sobs.

At this moment they heard a voice near them, which said solemnly and deliberately, —

"Why should you not be man and wife?"

Caudray raised his head. Déruchette looked up.

Gilliatt stood before them.

He had approached by a by-path.

He was no longer the same man that he had appeared on the previous night. He had arranged his hair, shaved his beard, put on shoes, and a white

shirt, with a large collar turned over sailor fashion. He wore a sailor's costume, but all was new. A gold ring was on his little finger. He seemed profoundly calm. His sunburnt skin had become pale: a hue of sickly bronze overspread it.

They looked at him astonished. Though so changed, Déruchette recognized him. But the words which he had spoken were so far from what was passing in their minds at that moment, that they had left no distinct impression.

Gilliatt spoke again: —

"Why should you say farewell? Be man and wife, and go together."

Déruchette started. A trembling seized her from head to foot.

Gilliatt continued: —

"Miss Lethierry is a woman. She is of age. It depends only on herself. Her uncle is but her uncle. You love each other —"

Déruchette interrupted in a gentle voice, and asked, "How came you here?"

"Be married," repeated Gilliatt.

Déruchette began to have a sense of the meaning of his words. She stammered out, —

"My poor uncle!"

"If the marriage was yet to be," said Gilliatt, "he would refuse. When it is over he will consent. Besides, you are going to leave here. When you return he will forgive."

Gilliatt added, with a slight touch of bitterness, "And then, he is thinking of nothing just now but the rebuilding of his boat. This will occupy his

mind during your absence. The Durande will console him."

"I cannot," said Déruchette, in a state of stupor which was not without its gleam of joy. "I must not leave unhappiness behind me."

"It will endure but for a short time," answered Gilliatt.

Caudray and Déruchette had been, as it were, bewildered. They recovered themselves now. The meaning of Gilliatt's words became plainer as their surprise diminished. There was a slight cloud still before them; but their part was not to resist. We yield easily to those who come to save. Objections to a return into Paradise are weak. There was something in the attitude of Déruchette, as she leaned imperceptibly upon her lover, which seemed to make common cause with Gilliatt's words. The enigma of the presence of this man, and of his utterances, which, in the mind of Déruchette in particular, produced various kinds of astonishment, was a thing apart. He said to them, "Be man and wife!" This was clear; if there was responsibility, it was his. Déruchette had a confused feeling that for many reasons he had the right to decide upon her fate. Caudray murmured, as if plunged in thought, "An uncle is not a father."

His resolution was corrupted by the sudden and happy turn in his ideas. The probable scruples of the clergyman melted, and dissolved in his heart's love for Déruchette.

Gilliatt's tone became abrupt and harsh, and like the pulsations of fever.

"It must be at once," he said. "You have time, but that is all. Come."

Caudray observed him attentively, and suddenly exclaimed, —

"I recognize you. It was you who saved my life."

Gilliatt replied, —

"I think not."

"Yonder," said Caudray, "at the extremity of the Banques."

"I do not know the place," said Gilliatt.

"It was on the very day that I arrived here."

"Let us lose no time," interrupted Gilliatt.

"And if I am not deceived, you are the man whom we met last night."

"Perhaps."

"What is your name?"

Gilliatt raised his voice: —

"Boatman! wait there for us. We shall return soon. You asked me, Miss, how I came to be here. The answer is very simple. I walked behind you. You are twenty-one. In this country, when persons are of age, and depend only on themselves, they may be married immediately. Let us take the path along the water-side. It is passable; the tide will not rise here till noon. But lose no time. Come with me."

Déruchette and Caudray seemed to consult each other by a glance. They were standing close together motionless; they were intoxicated with joy. There are strange hesitations sometimes on the edge of the abyss of happiness. They understood, as it were, without understanding.

"His name is Gilliatt," whispered Déruchette.

Gilliatt interrupted them with a sort of tone of authority.

"What are you waiting for?" he asked. "I tell you to follow me."

"Whither?" asked Caudray.

"There!"

And Gilliatt pointed with his finger towards the spire of the church.

Gilliatt walked on before, and they followed him. His step was firm, but they walked unsteadily.

As they approached the church an expression dawned upon those two pure and beautiful countenances, which was soon to become a smile. The approach to the church lighted them up. In the hollow eyes of Gilliatt there was the darkness of night. The beholder might have imagined that he saw a spectre leading two souls to Paradise.

Caudray and Déruchette scarcely took count of what had happened. The interposition of this man was like the branch clutched at by the drowning. They followed their guide with the docility of despair leaning on the first comer. Those who feel themselves near death easily accept the accident which seems to save. Déruchette, more ignorant of life, was more confident. Caudray was thoughtful. Déruchette was of age, it was true. The English formalities of marriage are simple, especially in primitive parts, where the clergyman has almost a discretionary power; but would the Dean consent to celebrate the marriage without even inquiring whether the uncle consented? — this was the question. Nevertheless,

they could learn; in any case there would be but a delay.

But what was this man; and if it was really he whom Lethierry the night before had declared should be his son-in-law, what could be the meaning of his actions? The very obstacle itself had become a providence. Caudray yielded; but his yielding was only the rapid and tacit assent of a man who feels himself saved from despair.

The pathway was uneven, and sometimes wet and difficult to pass. Caudray, absorbed in thought, did not observe the occasional pools of water or the heaps of shingle; but from time to time Gilliatt turned and said to him, "Take heed of those stones. Give her your hand."

CHAPTER III.

THE FORETHOUGHT OF SELF-SACRIFICE.

It struck ten as they entered the church.

By reason of the early hour, and also on account of the desertion of the town that day, the church was empty.

At the farther end, however, near the table which in the reformed church fills the place of the altar, there were three persons. They were the Dean, his evangelist, and the registrar. The Dean, who was the Rev. Jaquemin Hérode, was seated; the evangelist and the registrar stood beside him.

A book was open upon the table.

Beside him, upon a credence-table, was another book. It was the parish register, and also open; and an attentive eye might have remarked a page on which was some writing, of which the ink was not yet dry. By the side of the register were a pen and a writing-desk.

The Rev. Jaquemin Hérode rose on perceiving Caudray.

"I have been expecting you," he said. "All is ready."

The Dean, in fact, wore his officiating robes.

Caudray looked towards Gilliatt.

The reverend doctor added, "I am at your service, brother;" and he bowed.

It was a bow which turned neither to right nor left. It was evident from the direction of the Dean's gaze that he did not recognize the existence of any one but Caudray, for Caudray was a clergyman and a gentleman. Neither Déruchette, who stood aside, nor Gilliatt, who was in the rear, was included in the salutation. His look was a sort of parenthesis in which none but Caudray were admitted. The observance of these little niceties constitutes an important feature in the maintenance of order and the preservation of society.

The Dean continued, with a graceful and dignified urbanity:—

"I congratulate you, my colleague, from a double point of view. You have lost your uncle and are about to take a wife; you are blessed with riches on the one hand, and happiness on the other. Moreover, thanks to the boat which they are about to rebuild, Miss Lethierry will also be rich, which is as it should be. Miss Lethierry was born in this parish; I have verified the date of her birth in the register. She is of age and at her own disposal. Her uncle too, who is her only relative, consents. You are anxious to be united immediately, on account of your approaching departure. This I can understand; but this being the marriage of the rector of the parish, I should have been gratified to see it associated with a little more solemnity. I will consult your wishes by not detaining you longer than necessary. The essentials will be soon complied with.

The form is already drawn up in the register, and it requires only the names to be filled in. By the terms of the law and custom the marriage may be celebrated immediately after the inscription. The declaration necessary for the license has been duly made. I take upon myself a slight irregularity; for the application for the license ought to have been registered seven days in advance; but I yield to necessity and the urgency of your departure. Be it so, then. I will proceed with the ceremony. My evangelist will be the witness for the bridegroom; as regards the witness for the bride — "

The Dean turned towards Gilliatt. Gilliatt made a movement of his head.

"That is sufficient," said the Dean.

Caudray remained motionless; Déruchette was happy, but no less powerless to move.

"Nevertheless," continued the Dean, "there is still an obstacle."

Déruchette started.

The Dean continued: —

"The representative here present of Mess Lethierry applied for the license for you, and has signed the declaration on the register." And with the thumb of his left hand the Dean pointed to Gilliatt, which prevented the necessity of his remembering his name. "The messenger from Mess Lethierry," he added, "has informed me this morning that being too much occupied to come in person, Mess Lethierry desired that the marriage should take place immediately. This desire, expressed verbally, is not sufficient. In consequence of having to grant the license, and of

the irregularity which I take upon myself, I cannot proceed so rapidly without informing myself from Mess Lethierry personally, unless some one can produce his signature. Whatever might be my desire to serve you, I cannot be satisfied with a mere message; I must have some written document."

"That need not delay us," said Gilliatt; and he presented a paper to the Dean.

The Dean took it, perused it by a glance, seemed to pass over some lines as unimportant, and read aloud: "Go to the Dean for the license. I wish the marriage to take place as soon as possible; immediately would be better."

He placed the paper on the table, and proceeded: —

"It is signed 'Lethierry.' It would have been more respectful to address himself to me. But since I am called on to serve a colleague, I ask no more."

Caudray glanced again at Gilliatt. There are moments when mind and mind comprehend each other. Caudray felt that there was some deception; he had not the strength of purpose, perhaps he had not the idea of revealing it. Whether in obedience to a latent heroism, of which he had begun to obtain a glimpse, or whether from a deadening of the conscience, arising from the suddenness of the happiness placed within his reach, he uttered no word.

The Dean took the pen, and aided by the clerk filled up the spaces in the page of the register; then he rose, and by a gesture invited Caudray and Déruchette to approach the table.

The ceremony began. It was a strange moment. Caudray and Déruchette stood beside each other before the minister. He who has ever dreamed of a marriage in which he himself was chief actor may conceive something of the feeling which they experienced.

Gilliatt stood at a little distance in the shadow of the pillars.

Déruchette, on rising in the morning, desperate, thinking only of death and its associations, had dressed herself in white. Her attire, which had been associated in her mind with mourning, was suited to her nuptials. A white dress is all that is necessary for a bride.

A ray of happiness was visible upon her face. Never had she appeared more beautiful. Her features were remarkable for prettiness rather than what is called beauty. Their fault, if fault it be, lay in a certain excess of grace. Déruchette in repose — that is, disturbed neither by passion nor grief — was graceful above all. The ideal Virgin is the transfiguration of a face like this. Déruchette, ennobled by her suffering and her love, seemed to have caught that higher and more holy expression; to the sweetness that had been hers there was added dignity; with her freshness there was richer perfume. It was the difference between the field daisy and the lily.

The tears had scarcely dried upon her cheeks; one perhaps still lingered in the midst of her smiles. Traces of tears indistinctly visible form a pleasing but sombre accompaniment of joy.

The Dean, standing near the table, placed his finger upon the open book, and asked in a distinct voice whether they knew of any impediment to their union.

There was no reply.

"Amen!" said the Dean.

Caudray and Déruchette advanced a step or two towards the table.

"Joseph Ebenezer Caudray, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?"

Caudray replied, "I will."

The Dean continued: —

"Durande Déruchette Lethierry, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?"

Déruchette, in an agony of soul springing from her excess of happiness, murmured like some overflowing lamp rather than uttered, —

"I will."

Then followed the beautiful form of the Anglican marriage service. The Dean looked around, and in the twilight of the church uttered the solemn words, —

"Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?"

Gilliatt answered, "I do."

There was an interval of silence. Caudray and Déruchette felt a vague sense of oppression in spite of their joy.

The Dean placed Déruchette's right hand in Caudray's, and Caudray repeated after him: —

"I take thee, Durande Déruchette, to be my wedded wife for better for worse, for richer for

poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The Dean then placed Caudray's right hand in that of Déruchette, and Déruchette said after him: —

"I take thee to be my wedded husband for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

The Dean then asked, "Where is the ring?" The question took them by surprise. Caudray had no ring; but Gilliatt took off the gold ring which he wore upon his little finger. It was probably the wedding-ring which had been sold that morning by the jeweller in the Commercial Arcade.

The Dean placed the ring upon the book; then handed it to Caudray, who took Déruchette's little trembling left hand, passed the ring over her fourth finger, and said, —

"With this ring I thee wed!"

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," continued the Dean.

"Amen," said his evangelist.

Then the Dean said, "Let us pray."

Caudray and Déruchette turned towards the table, and knelt down.

Gilliatt, standing by, inclined his head.

So they knelt before God; while he seemed to bend under the burden of his fate.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR YOUR WIFE, WHEN YOU MARRY.

As they left the church they could see the "Cashmere" making preparations for her departure.

"You are in time," said Gilliatt.

They chose again the path leading to the Havelet. Caudray and Déruchette went before, Gilliatt this time walking behind them. They were two somnambulists. Their bewilderment had not passed away, but only changed in form. They took no heed of whither they were going or of what they did. They hurried on mechanically, scarcely remembering the existence of anything, feeling that they were united for ever, but scarcely able to connect two ideas in their minds. In ecstasy like theirs it is as impossible to think as it is to swim in a torrent. In the midst of their trouble and darkness they had been plunged in a Niagara of delight; they bore a Paradise within themselves. They did not speak, but conversed with each other by the mysterious sympathy of their souls. Déruchette pressed Caudray's arm to her side.

The footsteps of Gilliatt behind them reminded them now and then that he was there. They were deeply moved, but could find no words. The excess of emotion results in stupor. Theirs was delightful,

but overwhelming. They were man and wife: every other idea was subjected to that. What Gilliatt had done was well; that was as much as they could grasp. They experienced towards their guide a deep but vague gratitude in their hearts. Déruchette felt that there was some mystery to be explained, but not now. Meanwhile they accepted their unexpected happiness. They felt themselves controlled by the abruptness and decision of this man who conferred on them so much happiness with a kind of authority. To question him, to talk with him seemed impossible. Too many impressions rushed into their minds at once for that. Their absorption was pardonable.

Events succeed each other sometimes with the rapidity of hailstones. Their effect is overpowering; they deaden the senses. Falling upon existences habitually calm, they render incidents rapidly unintelligible even to those whom they chiefly concern; we become scarcely conscious of our own adventures; we are overwhelmed without guessing the cause, or crowned with happiness without comprehending it. For some hours Déruchette had been subjected to every kind of emotion: at first, surprise and delight at meeting Caudray in the garden; then horror at the monster whom her uncle had presented as her husband; then her anguish when the angel of her dreams spread his wings and seemed about to depart; and now her joy, a joy such as she had never known before, founded on an inexplicable enigma,—the monster of last night himself restoring her lover; marriage arising out of her torture; this Gilliatt, the evil destiny of last night, become to-day her saviour!

She could explain nothing to her own mind. It was evident that all the morning Gilliatt had had no other occupation than that of preparing the way for their marriage; he had done all; he had answered for Mess Lethierry, seen the Dean, obtained the license, signed the necessary declaration; and thus the marriage had been rendered possible. But Déruchette understood it not; if she had, she could not have comprehended the reasons. They did nothing but close their eyes to the world and, grateful in their hearts, yield themselves up to the guidance of this good demon. There was no time for explanations, and expressions of gratitude seemed too insignificant. They were silent in their trance of love.

The little power of thought which they retained was scarcely more than sufficient to guide them on their way, — to enable them to distinguish the sea from the land, and the "Cashmere" from every other vessel.

In a few minutes they were at the little creek.

Caudray entered the boat first. At the moment when Déruchette was about to follow she felt her sleeve held gently. It was Gilliatt, who had placed his finger upon a fold of her dress.

"Madam," he said, "you are going on a journey unexpectedly. I have thought that you would have need of dresses and clothes. You will find a trunk aboard the 'Cashmere,' containing a lady's clothing. It came to me from my mother. It was intended for my wife when I should marry. Permit me to ask your acceptance of it."

Déruchette, partially aroused from her dream,

turned towards him. Gilliatt continued in a voice which was scarcely audible: —

"I do not wish to detain you, but you see, madam, I feel that I ought to give you some explanation. On the day of your misfortune you were sitting in the lower room; you said something then it is easy to understand that you have forgotten. We are not compelled to remember every word we speak. Mess Lethierry was in great sorrow. It was certainly a noble vessel, and one that did good service. The misfortune was recent; there was a great commotion. Those are things one naturally forgets. It was only a vessel wrecked among the rocks; one cannot be always thinking of an accident. But what I wished to tell you was that, as it was said that no one would go, I went. They said it was impossible, but it was not. I thank you for listening to me a little. You can understand, madam, that if I went there it was not with the thought of displeasing you. This is a thing, besides, of old date. I know you are in haste. If there was time, if we could talk about this, you might perhaps remember. But it is all useless now. The history of it goes back to a day when there was snow on the ground; and once when I passed you I thought you smiled at me; that explains it all. With regard to last night, I had not had time to go to my home. I came from my labor; I was all torn and ragged; I startled you, and you fainted. I was to blame; people do not come like that to strangers' houses; I beg you will bear me no ill-will because of that. This is nearly all I had to say. You are about to sail. You will have fine weather; the wind

is in the east. Farewell, madam. You do not blame me for saying these few things to you? This is a last moment."

"I am thinking of the trunk you spoke of," said Déruchette. "Why do you not keep it for your wife, when you marry?"

"Madam," replied Gilliatt, "very likely — I shall never marry."

"That would be a pity," said Déruchette, "for you are so good. I thank you."

And Déruchette smiled. Gilliatt returned the smile.

Then he assisted her to step into the boat.

In less than a quarter of an hour afterwards Caudray and Déruchette were aboard the "Cashmere" in the roads.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT TOMB.

GILLIATT walked along the water-side, passed rapidly through St. Peter's Port, and then turned towards St. Sampson by the sea-shore. In his anxiety to meet no one whom he knew, he avoided the highways, now filled with foot passengers by his great achievement.

For a long time, as the reader knows, he had had a peculiar manner of traversing the country in all parts without being observed. He knew the by-paths, and favored solitary and winding routes; he had the shy habits of a wild beast who knows that he is disliked, and keeps at a distance. When quite a child, he had been quick to feel how little welcome men showed in their faces at his approach, and he had gradually contracted that habit of being alone which had since become an instinct.

He passed through the Esplanade, then by the Salerie. Now and then he turned and looked behind him at the "Cashmere" in the roads, which was beginning to set her sails. There was little wind; Gilliatt went faster than the "Cashmere." He walked with downcast eyes among the lower rocks at the water's edge. The tide was beginning to rise.

Suddenly he stopped, and turning his back, contemplated for some minutes a group of oaks beyond the rocks which concealed the road to the Vale. They were the oaks at the spot called the Basses Maisons. It was there that Déruchette once wrote with her finger the name of Gilliatt in the snow. Many a day had passed since that snow had melted away.

Then he pursued his way.

The day was beautiful, — more beautiful than any which had yet been seen that year. On that morning the world seemed to be decked as if for a bridal. It was one of those spring days when May suddenly pours forth all its beauty, and when Nature seems to have no thought but to rejoice and be happy. Amid the many murmurs from forest and village, from the sea and the air, a sound of cooing could be distinguished. The first butterflies of the year were resting on the early roses. Everything in Nature seemed new, — the grass, the mosses, the leaves, the perfumes, the rays of light. The sun shone as if it had never shone before. The pebbles seemed bathed in coolness. Birds but lately fledged sang out their deep notes from the trees; perhaps the very shell through which the tiny beak had broken was still to be seen; they fluttered among the trembling branches, essaying for the first time to use their new-found wings. They sang their first song; they used their wings for the first time. There was a chattering all together of goldfinches, pewits, tomtits, woodpeckers, bullfinches, and thrushes. The blossoms of lilacs, May lilies, daphnes, and melilots mingled their various hues in the thickets. A beautiful kind of water-

weed peculiar to Guernsey covered the pools with an emerald green, where the kingfishers and the water-wagtails, which make such graceful little nests, came down to bathe their wings. Through every opening in the branches appeared the deep blue sky. A few lazy clouds followed each other in the azure depths, making nymph-like undulations. The ear seemed to catch the sound of kisses sent from invisible lips. Every old wall had its tufts of wallflowers. The plum-trees and laburnums were in blossom; their white and yellow masses gleamed through the interlacing boughs. The spring showered all her gold and silver on the woods. The new shoots and leaves were green and fresh. Calls of welcome were in the air; the approaching summer opened her hospitable doors for birds coming from afar. It was the time of the arrival of the swallows. The clusters of furze-bushes bordered the steep sides of hollow roads in anticipation of the clusters of the hawthorn. The pretty and the beautiful reigned side by side; the magnificent and the graceful, the great and the little, had each their place. No note in the great concert of Nature was lost. Green microscopic beauties took their place in the vast universal plan in which all seemed distinguishable as in limpid water. Everywhere a divine fulness, a mysterious sense of expansion, suggested the sacred and mysterious effort of life struggling to be born. Glittering things glittered more than ever; loving natures became more tender. There was a hymn in the flowers, and a radiance in the sounds of the air. The wide-diffused harmony of Nature burst forth on every side. All things which felt

the dawn of life invited others to put forth shoots. A movement coming from below, and also from above, stirred vaguely all hearts susceptible to the scattered and subterranean influence of germination. The flower shadowed forth the fruit; young maidens dreamed of love. The reproduction of life premeditated by the controlling intelligence of the darkness was now the visible fact of this radiant universe. It was Nature's universal bridal. Life embraced the Infinite. It was fine, bright, and warm; through the hedges in the meadows children were seen laughing and playing at their games. The fruit-trees filled the orchards with their heaps of white and pink blossom. In the fields were primroses, cowslips, milfoil, daffodils, daisies, speedwell, jacinths, and violets. Blue borage and yellow irises swarmed with those beautiful little pink stars which flower always in groups, and are hence called "companions." Creatures with golden scales glided between the stones. The flowering house-leek covered the thatched roofs with purple patches. Women were plaiting hives in the open air; and the bees were abroad, mingling their humming with the murmurs from the sea.

When Gilliatt arrived at St. Sampson, the water had not yet risen at the further end of the harbor, and he was able to cross it dry-footed unperceived behind the hulls of vessels hauled up for repair. A number of flat stones were placed there at regular distances to make a causeway.

He was not observed. The crowd was at the other end of the port, near the narrow entrance, by Les Bravées. There his name was in every mouth.

They were, in fact, speaking about him so much that none paid attention to him. He passed, sheltered in some degree by the very commotion that he had caused.

He saw from afar the sloop in the place where he had moored it, with the funnel standing between its four chains; observed a movement of carpenters at their work, and confused outlines of figures passing to and fro; and he could distinguish the loud and cheery voice of Mess Lethierry giving orders.

He threaded the narrow alleys behind Les Bravées. There was no one there beside him. All curiosity was concentrated on the front of the house. He chose the footpath alongside the low wall of the garden, but stopped at the angle where the wild mallow grew. He saw once more the stone where he used to pass his time; saw once more the wooden garden seat where Déruchette was accustomed to sit, and glanced again at the pathway of the alley where he had seen the embrace of two shadows which had vanished.

He soon went on his way, climbed the hill of Vale Castle, descended again, and directed his steps towards Le Bû de la Rue.

Le Houmet-Paradis was a solitude.

His house was in the same state in which he had left it in the morning, after dressing himself to go to St. Peter's Port.

A window was open, through which his bagpipe might have been seen hanging to a nail upon the wall.

Upon the table was the little Bible given to him in token of gratitude by the stranger whom he now knew as Caudray.

The key was in the door; he approached, placed his hand upon it, turned it twice in the lock, put the key in his pocket, and departed.

He walked not in the direction of the town, but towards the sea.

He traversed his garden diagonally, taking the shortest way without regard to the beds, but taking care not to tread upon the plants which he had placed there because he had heard that they were favorites with Déruchette.

He crossed the parapet wall, and let himself down upon the rocks.

Going straight on, he began to follow the long ridge of rocks which connected Le Bû de la Rue with the great natural obelisk of granite rising erect from the sea, which was known as the Beast's Horn. This was the place of the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat.

He strode on from block to block like a giant among mountains. To make long strides upon a row of breakers is like walking upon the ridge of a roof.

A fisherwoman with dredge-nets, who had been walking naked-footed among the pools of sea-water at some distance, and had just regained the shore, called to him, "Take care; the tide is coming;" but he held on his way.

Having arrived at the great rock of the point, the horn which rises like a pinnacle from the sea, he stopped. It was the extremity of the promontory.

He looked around.

Out at sea a few sailing-boats at anchor were fishing. Now and then rivulets of silver glittered among

them in the sun; it was the water running from the nets. The "Cashmere" was not yet off St. Sampson. She had set her maintopsail, and was between Herm and Jethou.

Gilliatt rounded the rock, and came under the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat, at the foot of that kind of abrupt stairs where, less than three months before, he had assisted Caudray to come down. He ascended.

The greater number of the steps were already under water. Two or three only were still dry, by which he climbed.

The steps led up to the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat. He reached the niche, contemplated it for a moment, pressed his hand upon his eyes, and let it glide gently from one eyelid to the other, — a gesture by which he seemed to obliterate the memory of the past; then sat down in the hollow, with the perpendicular wall behind him and the ocean at his feet.

The "Cashmere" at that moment was passing the great round half-submerged tower, defended by one sergeant and a cannon, which marks the half-way in the roads between Herm and St. Peter's Port.

A few flowers stirred among the crevices in the rock about Gilliatt's head. The sea was blue as far as the eye could reach; the wind came from the east; there was a little surf in the direction of the island of Sark, of which only the western side is visible from Guernsey. In the distance appeared the coast of France like a mist, with the long yellow strips of sand about Carteret. Now and then a white butterfly flew by. The butterflies frequently fly out to sea.

The breeze was very light. The blue expanse,

both above and below, was tranquil. Not a ripple agitated those serpent-like forms, of an azure more or less dark, which indicate on the surface of the sea the lines of sunken rocks.

The "Cashmere," little moved by the wind, had set her topsail and studding-sails to catch the breeze. All her canvas was spread, but the wind being abeam her studding-sails only compelled her to hug the Guernsey coast more closely. She had passed the beacon of St. Sampson, and was off the hill of Vale Castle. The moment was approaching when she would double the point of Le Bû de la Rue.

Gilliatt watched her approach.

The air and sea were still; the tide rose, not by waves, but by an imperceptible swell; the level of the water crept upward without a palpitation; the subdued murmur from the open sea was soft as the breathing of a child.

In the direction of the harbor of St. Sampson faint echoes could be heard of carpenters' hammers. The carpenters were probably the workmen constructing the tackle-gear and apparatus for removing the engine from the sloop. The sounds, however, scarcely reached Gilliatt by reason of the mass of granite at his back.

The "Cashmere" approached with the slowness of a phantom.

Gilliatt watched it still.

Suddenly a touch and a sensation of cold caused him to look down. The sea had reached his feet.

He lowered his eyes, then raised them again.

The "Cashmere" was quite near.

The rock in which the rains had hollowed out the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat was so completely vertical, and there was so much water at its base, that in calm weather vessels were able to pass without danger within a few cables' lengths.

The "Cashmere" was abreast of the rock. It rose straight upwards as if it had grown out of the water, or like the lengthening out of a shadow. The rigging showed black against the heavens and in the magnificent expanse of the sea. The long sails, passing for a moment over the sun, became lighted up with a singular glory and transparence. The water murmured indistinctly; but no other noise marked the majestic gliding of that outline. The deck was as visible as if he had stood upon it.

The steersman was at the helm, a cabin-boy was climbing the shrouds, a few passengers leaning on the bulwarks were contemplating the beauty of the scene, the captain was smoking; but nothing of all this was seen by Gilliatt.

There was a spot on the deck on which the broad sunlight fell. It was on this corner that his eyes were fixed. In this sunlight were Déruchette and Caudray. They were sitting together side by side, like two birds warming themselves in the noonday sun, upon one of those covered seats with a little awning, which well-ordered packet-boats provided for passengers, and upon which was the inscription, when it happened to be an English vessel, "For ladies only." Déruchette's head was leaning upon Caudray's shoulder; his arm was around her waist; they held each other's hands with their fingers inter-

woven. A celestial light was discernible in those two faces formed by innocence. The one was virginal in its beauty; the other shone with a star's radiance. Their chaste embrace was expressive of their earthly union and their purity of soul. The seat was a sort of alcove, almost a nest; it was at the same time a glory round them, — the tender aureola of love passing into a cloud.

The silence was like the calm of heaven.

Caudray's gaze was fixed in gratitude and contemplation. Déruchette's lips moved; and amid that perfect silence, as the wind carried the vessel near the shore, and it glided within a few fathoms of the Gild-Holm-'Ur seat, Gilliatt heard the tender and musical voice of Déruchette exclaiming, —

"Look yonder. It seems as if there were a man upon the rock."

The vessel passed.

Leaving the promontory of Le Bû de la Rue behind, the "Cashmere" glided on upon the waters. In less than a quarter of an hour her masts and sails formed only a white obelisk, gradually decreasing against the horizon. Gilliatt felt that the water had reached his knees.

He contemplated the vessel speeding on her way.

The breeze freshened out at sea. He could see the "Cashmere" run out her lower studding-sails and her staysails to take advantage of the rising wind. She was already clear of the waters of Guernsey. Gilliatt followed the vessel with his eyes.

The waves had reached his waist.

The tide was rising; time was passing away.

The sea-mews and cormorants flew about him restlessly, as if anxious to warn him of his danger. It seemed as if some of his old companions of the Douvres rocks flying there had recognized him.

An hour had passed.

The wind from the sea was scarcely felt in the roads; but the form of the "Cashmere" was rapidly growing less. The vessel, according to all appearance, was sailing fast; it was already nearly off the Caskets.

There was no foam around the Gild-Holm-'Ur, no wave beat against its granite sides. The water rose peacefully; it was nearly level with Gilliatt's shoulders.

Another hour had passed.

The "Cashmere" was beyond the waters of Aurigny. The Ortach rock concealed it for a moment; it passed behind it, and came forth again as from an eclipse. The sloop was veering to the north upon the open sea. It was now only a point glittering in the sun.

The birds were hovering about Gilliatt, uttering short cries. Only his head was now visible. The tide was nearly at the full. Evening was approaching. Behind him, in the roads, a few fishing-boats were making for the harbor.

Gilliatt's eyes continued fixed upon the vessel in the horizon. Their expression resembled nothing earthly. A strange lustre shone in their calm and tragic depths. There was in them the peace of vanished hopes, the calm but sorrowful acceptance of an end far different from his dreams. By degrees the

dusk of heaven began to darken in them, though gazing still upon the point in space. At the same moment the wide waters round the Gild-Holm-'Ur and the vast gathering twilight closed upon them.

The "Cashmere," now scarcely perceptible, had become a mere spot in the thin haze.

Gradually the spot, which was but a shape, grew paler.

Then it dwindled, and finally disappeared.

At the moment when the vessel vanished on the line of the horizon the head of Gilliatt disappeared. Nothing was visible now but the sea.

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